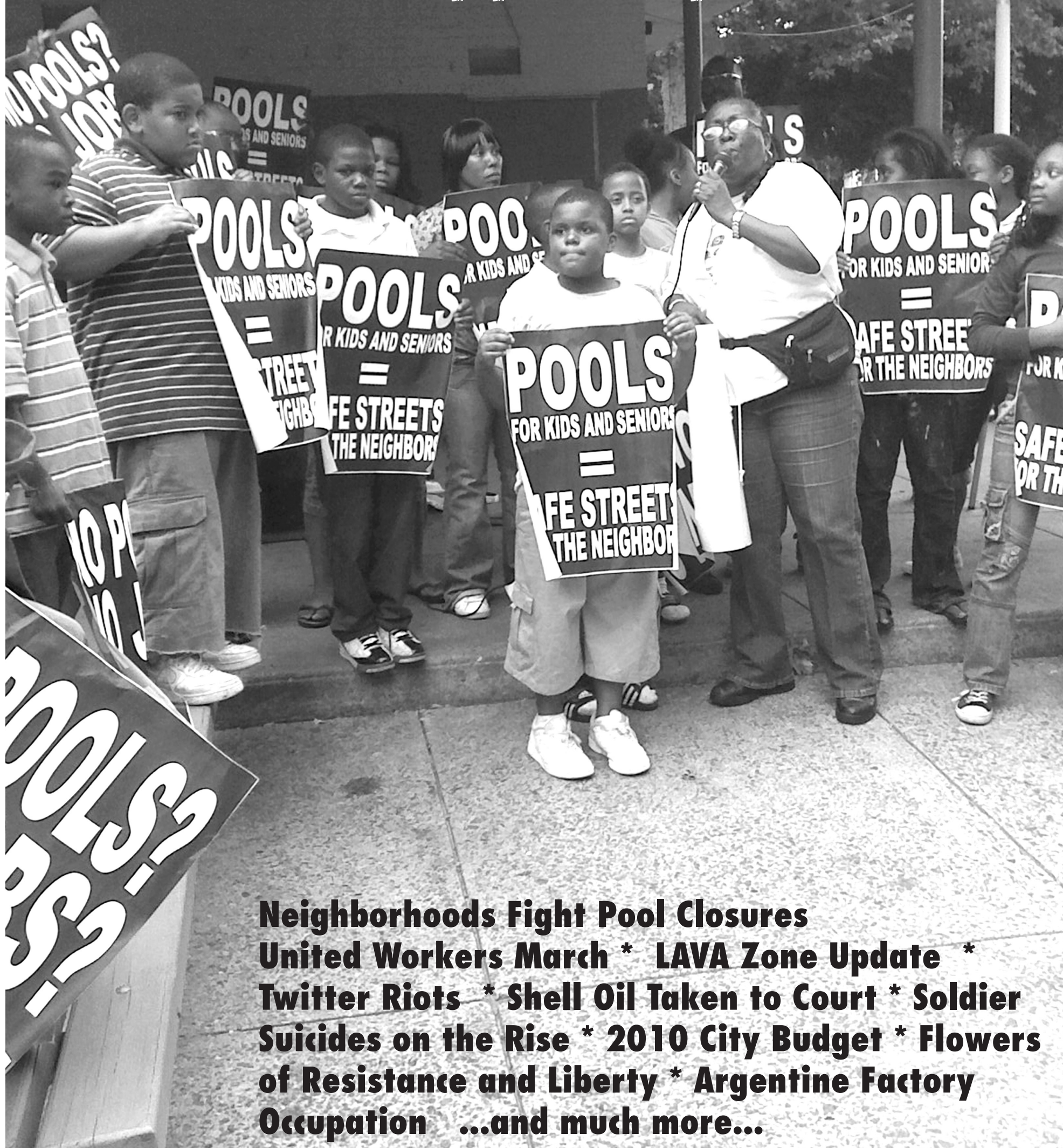


the

summer 2009

# defenestrator

a newspaper for hope and refusal



**Neighborhoods Fight Pool Closures**  
**United Workers March \* LAVA Zone Update \***  
**Twitter Riots \* Shell Oil Taken to Court \* Soldier**  
**Suicides on the Rise \* 2010 City Budget \* Flowers**  
**of Resistance and Liberty \* Argentine Factory**  
**Occupation ...and much more...**





the defenestrator

The defenestrator is Philly's sporadic newspaper for resistance, creative revolution and action. To defenestrate Power means total refusal of its tools and tentacles. Like the Hussites who had their oppressors thrown down from the Prague castle into the angry mob below, the defenestrator wrestles power and privilege from its highest and most protected strongholds and casts the beast out of the window and down into the angry hands of the people.

### Prison Staff! Caution ! Protected Private Property

This newspaper remains property of the sender unless it has been personally and materially accepted by the prisoner to whom it has been addressed. In the event that the prisoner is denied direct access to this publication, it must be returned to the sender with notice of reasons for failing to deliver to addressee.

### Get on the defenestrator email list!

We send out announcements for demonstrations, emergency mobilizations, benefit events and defenestrator events. If you want on, send a blank email from your address to [defenestrator-subscribe@lists.riseup.net](mailto:defenestrator-subscribe@lists.riseup.net) or click the link on our website. The list is low traffic (usually about 1 message a week) and easy to get off if you so choose.

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[www.defenestrator.org](http://www.defenestrator.org)

## THE TEXAS TWO SENTENCING

Two Texas activists, David McKay, 22, and Bradley Crowder, 23, have been sentenced to several years in prison for charges stemming from the 2008 RNC. David and Bradley were accused of making and possessing eight molotov cocktails, though neither was either alleged to have used or distributed them. Both activists were arrested during the RNC and have been held in prison since that time. The cases depended heavily on the testimony of Brandon Darby, a well-known activist who has been working with the federal government for at least the past two years. Bradley Crowder pled guilty to possession of an unregistered firearm and received a two year sentence. After his first trial resulted in a hung jury, David McKay pled guilty at the opening of his second

trial and was recently sentenced to four years in prison. During David McKay's first trial, a great deal of evidence was presented that demonstrated that Brandon Darby had entrapped Bradley and David by initiating and encouraging them to participate in illegal actions while being paid by the government. Brandon Darby was one of five known government informants to be involved in the 2008 RNC. These informants are dangerous to our movements and our friends. Please support David and Bradley! They are currently awaiting jail transfer and their new mailing address should be posted on their website soon. For more info check out [www.freethetexas2.com](http://www.freethetexas2.com)



## Suicide rates among U.S. Soldiers surpasses General Pop rates

by Bronwyn Lepore

“War is always a betrayal. It is about betrayal of the young by the old, of cynics by idealists and of soldiers and Marines by politicians” Chris Hedges, author of War is a force that Gives Us Meaning

More soldiers died from committing suicide after the Vietnam War than were killed in combat, and statistics show that combat veterans are twice as likely to commit suicide as those in the general population. A recent spate of suicides among U.S. soldiers who have fought or are still serving in Iraq and Afghanistan soldiers highlights the continuation of such trends.

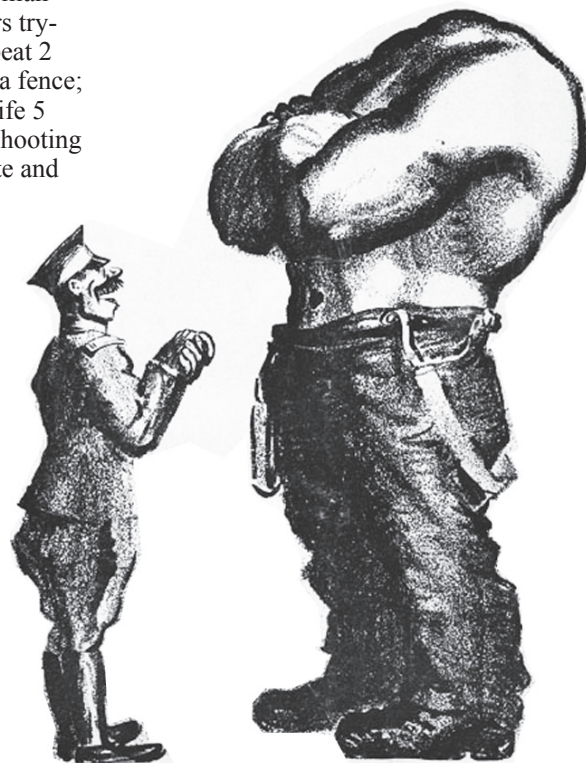
Isolation, long hours, multiple deployments (many soldiers are on their third or fourth “tours”), dangerous interactions between medications prescribed to reduce the stress of combat and caffeine and alcohol, sleep disorders, anxiety, lack of treatment for or tracking of depressed soldiers, and PTSD caused by the trauma of combat have all contributed to an increase in suicides by more than 60% since 2003, outpacing the rate for the general population. Fort Campbell, Kentucky, base for the oft-deployed 101st Airborne Division experienced 14 suicides last year. Dan De Luce of Agency France-Press explains that “tours of duty since 2001 have come ever more frequently

and last longer” contributing to the rise in stress-related outcomes.

Such stress has also caused increases in rates of spousal abuse and murder, brutal and violent acts upon return to “civilian life” - recently two returned soldiers trying to rob a farm in Iowa brutally beat 2 52-yr-old farmers and tied them to a fence; a 35-yr-old vet shot his pregnant wife 5 times in the head and neck before shooting himself – social alienation and acute and debilitating depression.

While Obama has talked up an end to the occupation of Iraq, the plan to keep 50,000 troops indefinitely on 14 permanent bases there, the continuing 8-year occupation of Afghanistan with the recent troop surge of 30,000 and plans for increased military ops in Pakistan where U.S. drone strikes have already caused civilian casualties, hardly dampens our war-based economic trends, which will continue to cause suffering among soldiers and civilians alike: In May 20 U.S. soldiers were killed and over 50 wounded, and the Iraqi death toll is typically 10 times the number of troop casualties.

For more info, go to <http://ivaw.org> (Iraq Veterans Against the War) and check out independent journalist Dahr Jamail's ongoing reports at <http://dahrjamailiraq.com/>.



At last, a perfect soldier!



# Baltimore's United Workers March on Inner Harbor

Scott Pinkelman

The United Workers, a group of low-wage workers dedicated to ending poverty, have been securing living wages and human rights for workers in Baltimore since 2002. This April 18th, the group organized the 'B-More Fair,' a gathering of community organizations, faith groups, and unions from Baltimore and beyond to celebrate human rights values under the slogan 'Our Lives, Our City, Our Way.' Numerous organizations came together to exchange materials and experiences as musical acts performed and a live radio broadcast was conducted.

The fair was followed by the Human Rights Zone March, where the United Workers led a march to Baltimore's tourist playground, the Inner Harbor. The march was in response to various reports of poverty wages, mistreatment and sexual abuse in the businesses of the Inner Harbor after since the group declared the area a human rights zone and conducted surveys of workers last October. On the Human Rights March, the United Workers delivered human rights violations notices to the area's three worst employers--The Cheesecake Factory, M&S Grill, and Phillips Seafood. The United Workers declared Phillips Seafood the worst violator and demanded that the restaurant enter into a binding 15-year economic human rights contract securing dignified working conditions, living wages for all workers and contractors, and contributions to worker health care and education funds.

The United Workers have vowed to continue organizing to secure economic human rights for all workers in Baltimore's inner harbor.

For videos and photos of the fair as well as updates on the United Workers' organizing, check out: <http://unitedworkers.org/>



*PARTY WITH THE  
DEF COLLECTIVE!!*

Shake your ass with DJs Alex, Andalalu-  
cha and the defenestrator collective. Help  
us raise the funds to keep publishing !!

*JULY 10 AT NINJA HOUSE*  
*4707 HAZEL AVE*  
*SEE BACK COVER FOR DETAILS*



## The People vs. The Banksters: A mass snowball fight in the City of London.

On February 2nd, the people of London responded to the global financial crisis...with snowballs! Taking advantage London's best snow in living memory, forty people gathered in the City of London--London's financial center--to challenging the workers of the recently bailed-out Royal Bank of Scotland to a snowball fight. Calling attention to RBS's investments in the coal industry, this snowbal-armed crowd drew a few 'banksters' (bank-ers + gangsters) out of their office building for a light-hearted showdown. Snowballs to all the bankers who have helped wreck the economy!

<http://www.labofii.net/experiments/peoplevsbanksters/>

## A South St. Twitter Riot

NBC Phila reports: "A mob of tech-savvy teens tweeted their way into the same place in South Philly over the weekend and then went wild."

"It's kind of a new dynamic that's growing, with large groups of juveniles using the social networks to get out the word," said Philly police Lt. Frank Vanore. "We're not going to tolerate it."

Hundreds of teens who coordinated through MySpace and Twitter hijacked a taxi at 12th and South Street, assaulted and yanked a woman and passenger out of their car, and vandalized a convenience store at Broad and Catharine Streets.



Police noticed the same sort of thing happening in the past few weeks. They've been monitoring the social networking sites, but this latest gathering was bigger - more than 100 teens - and overwhelmed law enforcement. "With a big crowd, there's nothing you can do," Vanore said.

A subsequent article in the Inquirer claimed "as many as 10,000 youths hit South Street, catching police off-guard and overwhelming officers."

Recognizing the exciting (and dangerous) potential of this new technology, we at the defenestrator decided to "get with" this twitter thing too. You can hear about our exciting dance parties, protests, and we promise to tweet about any rioting we plan! Sign up to receive text messages on your phone and maybe you'll get there before the popo show up and spoil the fun.

<http://twitter.com/defcollective>



# LAVA UPDATE

This section hopes to highlight activities of the LAVA collective and LAVA inhabitants/groups to encourage involvement, participation and input.

LAVA is a center for radical media and organizing located at 4134 Lancaster Ave. in the Belmont neighborhood of West Philadelphia. The LAVA collective's mission is to create an empowering and welcoming physical space where diverse communities converge to build connections and break down barriers, blending media-making, artistic expression and hardy nuts and bolts organizing in order to advance movements for justice.

For more info, a calendar of events, hours, etc. visit [www.lavazone.org](http://www.lavazone.org), or come visit, check out a meeting, and get involved. LAVA also needs your financial support – large and small contributions are welcome. Check out our website for info on making regular small donations. Also stay on the lookout for our full newsletter coming soon. Some of our best people didn't make def deadline this time round.



ACT UP Philadelphia (20 years in the movement) the AIDS coalition to unleash power is a diversified, non-partisan group of individuals, united in anger and dedicated to ending the AIDS crisis

through direct action.

We encourage all who are courageous enough to try to change the world to visit our new blog site where you can post, comment, or follow our activities: [www.actupphilly.blogspot.com](http://www.actupphilly.blogspot.com) "ACT-UP, Blog Back, Fight AIDS"

As we have for the past 20 years, ACT UP Philly still meets at 6:00pm every Monday evening at St. Luke's Church of the Epiphany. St. Luke's Church is located at 330 S. 13th St. All are welcome.

Visit our website for updates on our Local Housing Campaign and to support the work of ACT-UP Philly by donating to our PayPal account: [www.critpath.org/actup](http://www.critpath.org/actup)

## FOOD NOT BOMBS

North Philly Food Not Bombs is an organization that rescues discarded vegetarian food and redistributes it to hungry people for free. North Philly FNB operates Sundays and Mondays. North Philly FNB cooks at LAVA 4134 Lancaster Avenue and serves at 19th and Vine. Sunday-- cooking at LAVA at 3pm, serving at 19th and Vine at 5:30pm. Monday-- cooking at LAVA at 5pm, serving at 19th and Vine at 7:30pm

## 2 rooms available at LAVA!!

In the last months, both Radio Volta and the Media Mobilizing Project both moved into spaces of their own, leaving 2 empty rooms looking for new occupants. If you are an organization or project looking for a home in both our physical building and want to join the LAVA collective to help self manage the building, please be in touch! We don't pay rent here, but everyone is expected to contribute financially and organizationally to keeping things running. A more thorough update with info will come soon. Check out the [lavazone.org](http://lavazone.org) for more info or come by the space and inquire!

# HRC-2009!

The Human Rights Coalition is a grass roots non-profit organization whose aims, purposes and goals are responsive to the needs of incarcerated citizens and their families. It is unique from other organizations in that it is operated by prisoners, ex-prisoners and their families.

With nearly nine years in existence, HRC is still vibrant and in touch with the reality of the needs of those it serves. HRC's newsletter, THE MOVEMENT is read by over 500 prisoners, their families and other prison advocates across the nation. HRC's monthly meetings provide a safe place for prisoner's families who need (sometimes) a compassionate and understanding listener. Meetings are held the 2nd Monday of each month on the 2nd floor of the LAVA-Space (4134 Lancaster, Ave.).

On Tuesday, June 9, HRC participated in the Beyond The Wall Prison Health and Re-Entry Summit (at Temple University's Student Learning Center), hosted by Philly Fights and a large number of other Philadelphia based organizations. HRC offered information to pertaining to their model of advocacy; how to address prison abuse, communicating with prison officials, elected officials, electronic media and, organize rallies to protest prison abusive treatment.

This August 2009 from 10am to 2pm HRC and supporters are holding a protest rally in front of CFCF on State Road as a part of a two-part process to raise public awareness of prison abuse and to call on our lawmakers to STOP PRISON ABUSE in Pennsylvania prisons. The second part of this process is to rally before the Pennsylvania Department of Corrections. For further information concerning the upcoming rallies, please visit our website [www.hrcoalition.org](http://www.hrcoalition.org) or give us a call at (215) 387-6155.

As a respected prisoner's rights advocate prisoners have relied on HRC since its inception for support and aid in their fight against personal abuses. HRC typically receives 50-70 letters each month from prisoners and their families requesting help in fighting every imaginable form of prison abuse. HRC does its best to address these requests; through contacting prison administrators, elected officials and, when necessary, referring complaints we can't handle to a host of allies and partnering prisoner's rights groups.

Please know that all are welcomed to get involved. If you are interested in HRC and its work, or if you want to donate time, resources or funds, give us a call at (215) 387-6155. If you have a computer you may contact us by email: [Info@hrcoalition.org](mailto:Info@hrcoalition.org).

HRC:

The Human Rights Coalition  
4134 Lancaster Avenue, Phila., PA 19104  
(215) 387-6155

## LAVA LIBRARY

The LAVA library is a two-way lending library and community space serving the West Philadelphia and Belmont neighborhoods. We provide radical literature and other research and reading materials including newspaper archives, zines/magazine collections, and movies to check out, as well as internet access free and available to the public. We strive to be a welcoming space connecting people working for social change and creating a fertile and safe atmosphere for the sharing of ideas.

## COME ON BY AND CHECK US OUT

We are also always looking for new volunteers to help:

- keep the library open 4 days a week (and more in the future)
- catalog new books
- help people with writing resumes, and accessing information on-line.
- learn how to connect them to housing, health and employment resources
- plan and host events (films, book readings, writing groups, etc...)
- and overall help the library thrive as an environment instigating inspiration and empowerment



**LAVA 4134 LANCASTER AVE. PHILADELPHIA PA 19143**



# GeoClan.com

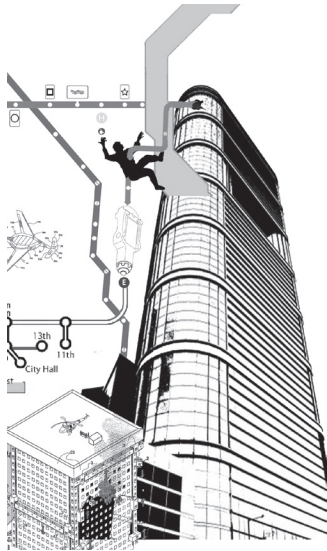
The GeoClan.com website is still going on strong in our 6th year of operation. The organization, GeoClan, is going through some restructuring right now with vision/mission and reevaluating how that relates to the services we want to provide. There has been a lot of personal growth, including the births of children, marriage, a member pursuing his Masters degree and much more. William Baptist is doing audio/visual filming and editing. Norman Green (N.Batez), Clayton Ruley (Constant) and Jude Graham (DJ Trach Metropolis) are hosts of GeoRadio on WPEB 88.1FM every other Friday from 6-9pm talking about politics, music, sports, community issues, pop culture, style and more. The organization still does its MLK Symposium in January, but until we solidify our status and reevaluation, we need to fall back a bit from the events/programs. We anticipate things getting much better going into the month of August and we'd like to thank the LAVA collective for their support and patience as GeoClan continues to grow and build. We Still Make Change!

GeoClan isn't going anywhere, but we needed to start walking before we continued to run. right now with vision/mission and reevaluating how that relates to the services we want to provide. There has been a lot of personal growth, including the births of children, marriage, a member pursuing his Masters degree and much more. William Baptist is doing audio/visual filming and editing. Norman Green (N.Batez), Clayton Ruley (Constant) and Jude Graham (DJ Trach Metropolis) are hosts of GeoRadio on WPEB 88.1FM every other Friday from 6-9pm talking about politics, music, sports, community issues, pop culture, style and more. The organization still does its MLK Symposium in January, but until we solidify our status and reevaluation, we need to fall back a bit from the events/programs. We anticipate things getting much better going into the month of August and we'd like to thank the LAVA collective for their support and patience as GeoClan continues to grow and build. We Still Make Change!



## defenestrator

The defenestrator is Philly's sporadic (we are moving towards less sporadic – Summer, Fall, Winter, Spring – see our website for submission deadlines) newspaper for resistance, creative revolution and action. Our collective meets every first and third Monday in our 3rd fl. LAVA office. We are excited by a recent influx of new members, but there's lots of work involved in getting a



paper out – writing, editing, artwork, submission seeking, prisoner mailing, film screenings, writing to prisoners, layout, fundraising, etc. – so we are always looking for new folks. If you are interested in getting involved come to a meeting and we'll help you plug in. If you are interested in learning some of the skills involved in getting out the paper, we provide training. There's something for every interest and skill level, so don't be shy. If meetings are not your thing, get in touch with us at [rosa@defenestrator.org](mailto:rosa@defenestrator.org) or join us for a monthly radical film screening (last Thursday of every month) at Firehouse Bikes, 50th and Baltimore. Check out our website at [www.defenestrator.org](http://www.defenestrator.org) for events, updates, articles and follow us on twitter for exciting announcements.

**LAVA IS OPEN :**  
**SUNDAY NOON - 6PM**  
**TUESDAY AND WEDNESDAY**

## Argentine Factory in the Hands of the Workers: FASINPAT a Step Closer to Permanent Worker Control

by Marie Trigona  
reprinted from [www.upsidedownworld.org](http://www.upsidedownworld.org)  
Wednesday, 27 May 2009



While many workers around the world are worried about downsizing, lay-offs and how to protect their jobs, workers in Argentina have come up with their own solution to business closures – Occupy, Resist and Produce. Many factories, like the Zanon Ceramics plant, have been running without bosses for almost a decade. In response to a financial crisis in 2001 that wrecked Argentina's economy, workers decided to occupy their workplaces and start up production without bosses in order to safe-guard their jobs.

Zanon Ceramics, now known as FASINPAT (Factory without a boss), has re-defined the basis of production: without workers, bosses are unable to run businesses; without bosses, workers can do it better. As the largest recuperated factory in Argentina, and occupied since 2001, the Zanon ceramics plant in the Patagonian province of Neuquén now employs 470 workers.

This month, the FASINPAT collective is a step closer in winning permanent control of the factory. The provincial government presented a bill in the provincial legislature for the expropriation of the factory. If this bill is passed, and it looks favorable, it would mean a solution to the workers' long standing legal woes.

Since the plant began production under worker control in 2002, they have faced numerous eviction threats and other violent attacks. The government has tried to evict them five times using police operatives. On April 8, 2003, during the most recent eviction attempt, over 5,000 community members from Neuquén came out to defend the factory.

In a press release, the worker collective said that the legislature received the bill was a positive step. "The historic progress we made today was the result of a hard fight. The collective struggle and mobilization of Worker Self-management, along with the workers in this country, community support and international recognition has made this possible."

In 2001, Zanon's owners decided to close their doors and fire the workers without paying months of back pay or indemnity. Leading up to the massive layoffs and the plant's closure, workers went on strike in 2000. The owner, Luis Zanon with over 75 million dollars in debt to public and private creditors, fired en masse most of the workers and closed the factory in 2001—a bosses' lockout. In October 2001, workers declared the plant under worker control. The workers camped outside the factory for four months, pamphletting and partially blocking a highway leading to the capital city Neuquén. While the workers were camping outside the factory, a court ruled that the employees could sell off remaining stock. After the stock ran out, on March 2, 2002, the workers' assembly voted to start up production without a boss. For more than eight years, FASINPAT has created jobs, supported community projects and shown the world that we don't need bosses.

Luis Zanon's debts of over \$70 million are still outstanding, while many of the creditors want their money back, pushing for the eviction and foreclosure of the ceramics plant. The current bill presented in the legislature would mean that the state would pay off 22 million pesos (around \$7 million) to the creditors. One of the main creditors is the World Bank – which gave a loan of 20 million dollars to Luis Zanon for the construction of the plant, which he never paid back. The other major creditor is the Italian company SACMY that produces state of the art ceramics manufacturing machinery and is owed over \$5 million.

Omar Villablanca, a worker at Zanon said that the workers are most concerned about providing job continuity – safeguarding the 470 jobs that the factory without a boss have created and maintained since 2001. He stressed that FASINPAT needs a formal long-term legal solution in order to survive as a competitive business in a faltering economy.

"The state needs to make laws so that workers can work. In eight years we haven't asked the state for anything other than an expropriation law," said Jose Luis Paris, another worker from FASINPAT.

### Economic Crisis Grips Argentina

Argentina is in a better position than other Latin American nations in the face of the deepening global crisis. From 2003 to 2007, Argentina enjoyed a high economic growth rate, between 8 and 9 percent. However, with the global economy in recession the nation's growth has come to a halt, and it is expected that Argentina will see a drastic drop Gross Domestic Product in 2010.

Many independent analysts expect that the global recession will affect Argentina's real economy, that's to say industry and employment rates will suffer from the crisis, rather than the financial sector which already took a major blow in 2001. Those who benefited from Argentina's economic recovery of course are now those who are using this crisis as an excuse to downsize and lay-off workers.

continued on page 12 6



# City Council Passes 2010 Budget

by Scott

The Philadelphia City Council passed the city's 3.8 billion dollar budget for Fiscal Year 2010 on May 21st, 2009. This budget, whether the Mayor and Council admit it or not, was a response to the popular pressure around cuts to services that began with Mayor Michael Nutter's Nov 6, 2008 announcement of a mid-year 'correction'—cuts that would have closed 13 libraries across the city. This year's budget, while avoiding the drastic cuts originally proposed, still balances the budget on working people by increasing taxes and cutting services. The budget does little to solve long-standing problems in the city's finances or address the roots of the budget crises: property tax delinquency, capital flight, and nationwide economic trends—such as declining wages and reckless speculation by Wall Street—that are out of reach of even the most powerful members of city government.

## The 2010 Budget at a Glance

The Council voted 17-0 on each bill dealing with the compromise budget that Council and Mayor Nutter eventually agreed on. Initially Nutter had proposed a three-year sales tax increase and a two-year property tax increase; Council nixed the property tax increase and got the Mayor to approve of a five-year sales tax increase of 1%, from 7% to 8%.

Additionally, the plan would defer \$235 million in payments to the city's pensions fund—already considered to be in trouble. While the city hopes to make up for these payments after two years of increased sales tax revenues, municipal union leaders have expressed concerns about the wisdom of the plan.

While the budget avoided the drastic cuts that were first considered (Nutter's so-called 'Plan B Budget'), it still cuts vital programs used by everyday Philadelphians. Accord-

ing to the Coalition for Essential Services, PSA to protest at city hall, this year's budget

charges fees for the uninsured to go to health centers, eliminates the Adolescent Violence Reduction Program, reduces library hours to 5 days a week, eliminates after December the LEAP afterschool program for homework assistance and computer literacy which serves 85,000 1st through 12th graders, shuts down many city pools which average 12,000 swimmers per day, cuts seasonal recreation jobs for teenagers which will result in many less children enrolled in our city's summer camps, and cuts the Housing Trust Fund by \$500,000 and the Child Care Facilities Fund by \$200,000.3

## Protests at City Council

The City's unfair budget wasn't passed without dissent, however. The Coalition for Essential Service (CES) formed this winter during the struggle to keep the libraries open, and organized an action at the City Council on the day of the budget vote. Its focus was on the press conference outside of Council's chambers before the vote. This well-organized event allowed community leaders and citizens to effectively voice their displeasure with the so-called 'People's Budget' in the corporate media, detailing the harmful effects of the cuts and calling for alternate sources of revenue. During the proceedings, about two dozen people silently held signs as the council unanimously approved the budget. Soon after, the group spontaneously left the chambers chanting “Where's the people's budget!?!” The group continued chanting in the hall outside until CES member Sheri Cohen was granted an interview. CES has consistently demanded preserving services and raising revenues through the wage tax, business privilege tax, and payments from mega 'non-profits' such as the University of Pennsylvania.

## More to come

Although the budget has been approved, much remains up in the air. Mayor Nutter must get approval from the Republican-controlled State Senate in Harrisburg for the sales tax increase and pension deferment plan. If his requests are denied the city might be forced to implement parts of the so-called 'Plan B Budget.' Many of the municipal unions' contracts are up this summer and the city is looking to squeeze concessions out of them.

While popular movements were unable to stop budget cuts this year, the struggle to keep the libraries open and the persistent efforts of CES have set several important precedents. Most of all, the reversal of the library closures has shown that people can organize and win to preserve what's owed to them. Additionally, there has been consistent popular and left-wing organizing in the City budget proceedings since November—starting just two months after the beginning of a severe economic crisis. Finally, CES's chant of 'Where's the people's budget' reclaims what the city took from the movement—an idea of the a budget by and for people. This slogan can be used in the future... not only to suggest a more fair budget that guarantees decent wages, adequate services, and requires the rich to pay their fair share, but also the idea of participatory budgeting, where people directly and democratically decide how city money will be spent.

See Media Mobilizing Project's coverage of the protest at: <http://www.allforthetaking.org/i-want-our-politicians-think>

For more information on participatory budgeting check out: <http://www.participatorybudgeting.org/>

# Soldier for Culture: Solare Stare

A music review by seedless.bbv

Native son Solare Stare (born and raised in Germantown section of Philadelphia) has unearthed a treasure, in the form of recordings with Ukoo Flani Mau Mau, and Mandugu Digital. Heartfelt, soulful... these words do not do this justice! This is what hip-hop heads have been waiting for and they didn't even know it, a trip home to its Afro roots, uninhibited. Natural with rhythms of Kiswahili flow and a host of producers and collaborations mash'd up with true Philly STYLE!

Shina F / Mandugu Digital, and Namna Hii (like this) f/mc Kah, are already blowing up on the radio in Nairobi, in preparation for the Albums african release at the 2009 Nairobi music festival where Solare will be performing with Ukoo Flani Mau Mau, at Club Sound, and Nyayo stadium..... wait... So how did an average kid from Germantown end up performing for thousands in Kenya..?

One word: EDUCATION. In 1999 Solare earned a UNCF scholarship which gave him an opportunity to study in Kenya for a year. Already a vet of the Rhythmic Freaks (an underground philly based hip

hop crew whose members included I B 4 EVA, host of Gathering, the longest running hip hop event in Philadelphia), Solare wasted no time making connections in Nairobi and was soon performing with up and coming star Nazizi. He returned in 2004 and met Kalamashaka Mashifa and Ukoo Flani Mau Mau. This was the genesis of the Soldiers For Culture movement, who display the true importance of cross cultural collaborations. Spreading truth in the form of hip hop to a world-wide audience in a multi lingual format.

And now we have the album Soldiers For Culture, a realization of this vision, and an intelligent blend of hardcore Philly Hip Hop. "Juke Dat", is another roots track sure to tear up the dance floor while paying tribute to early Afro-american fathers of contemporary music such as Chuck Berry and Howlin' Wolf. "This is a song for my hustlers" is a tragic look into the realities of drug dealing, street life and the shattered dreams of inner-city youth. The list goes on, but i don't want to spoil all the surprises.. so what are you waiting for..? Go put your order in now.

[www.myspace.com/phillysoldiers4culture](http://www.myspace.com/phillysoldiers4culture)  
-seedless.bbv@gmail.com





# Flowers of Resistance and Liberty

by Robert Saleem Holbrook

It is said that truth crushed to earth will rise again. The saying has proven all too true in Latin America as a wave of progressive leftist movements and governments have swept into power in a region considered by the United States to be its “backyard.” This is a remarkable feat considering just a generation ago leftist activists and movements in Latin America were hunted down and exterminated by right wing military regimes, backed by the United States, in a hemispheric campaign reminiscent of the Spanish conquistadors extermination of native communities in the Americas.



*Chilean victim of state terror*

In the Southern Cone of Latin America (Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Uruguay, Paraguay) during the 70’s and 80’s under “Operation Condor” military regimes hunted down, assassinated and “disappeared” tens of thousands of leftist activists. Using intelligence and technology supplied by the United States, activists “disappeared” into the night never to be seen or heard from again. Their alleged crime? Seeking to build an alternative to the exploitive economic order imposed on their societies by the United States and the military regimes the US propped up to preserve its interests at the expense of the interests of the peoples of the region.

The military regimes of the Southern Cone had a deep admiration for Nazi Germany and many fugitive Nazis settled in these countries after World War 2. Inspired by Hitler’s “Night and Fog” campaign against resistance fighters in Europe, where Hitler ordered his generals to make the resistance fighters and their supporters disappear into the night and fog forever, the secret police of “Operation Condor” sought to instill terror into the population of their own countries by murdering thousands of leftists in secret execution locations and then secretly disposing of their bodies. The terror this imposed on targeted populations cannot be underestimated. Imagine watching your

father, sister, brother or loved one wrestled into an unmarked car by plainclothes police or military men and never seeing him or her again. Imagine going to the police station to file a report and never receiving a response as if your loved one never existed.

This was just the pain the families and friends of disappeared activists endured. The experience the activists had to endure was much more brutal. The Argentinean military regime devised a plan to ensure that the disappearance of activists was done efficiently and that the bodies would not be discovered. Their preferred method of execution was to bind dozens of activists together, load them onto a helicopter and fly them over the cold waters of the Atlantic Ocean and toss them out the helicopter doors. Oftentimes, however, the restless ocean would toss back the evidence of the regime’s crimes and fishermen on the beaches would occasionally come across rows of dead activists bound to one another washed up on the beach’s shores.

The military regime of Chile preferred to conduct mass executions in its main soccer stadium. It also would load dozens of activists into trucks, and then drive the trucks off the cliffs of mountain roads and tell the victim’s families their loved ones died in an automobile accident en route to prison. The military regimes of Brazil, Paraguay and Uruguay chose “secret prisons” located under population centers such as department stores, sports stadiums and beach fronts. Activists were tortured and executed in secret prisons literally right beneath the social life of unsuspecting and terrified populations.

In Central America the campaign against leftist activists and movements took on a more unsophisticated method of lethality. In El Salvador, Guatemala and Honduras the military regimes used right wing paramilitaries composed of major land-owner families, families and supporters of the military and common criminals to murder activists. Oftentimes these activists were kidnapped at night and in the morning their bodies would be discovered in garbage dumps on the city’s outskirts. Most of the victims died of torture and were killed with machetes or gunshot wounds to the head. The right wing paramilitary of Central America distinguished themselves from their Southern Cone Latin American allies by their tactic of public executions and publicly displaying the bodies of their victims, a terror tactic aimed at the civilian population declaring that opposition to the right wing government and United States’ interest will not be tolerated and no one will be able to defend you. The public assassination of El Salvador’s Catholic Archbishop Oscar Romero in 1980 by a United States sponsored death squad in El Salvador was designed to hammer his point home to the civilian population. Archbishop Romero aligned himself and his church with the oppressed and poor of El Salvador

and began calling for a re-distribution of the land and wealth. The regime’s response was to execute him.

A common theme connects the activist murdered throughout Latin America by right wing military regimes. The majority were ordinary activists not involved in military actions against the regimes. With the exception of Nicaragua, where the Sandinista movement overthrew the U.S.-backed military regime of Somoza in 1979, and El Salvador, where the FMLN movement fought the military regime to a brutal stalemate until 1992, leftist movements in Latin America did not garner major mass support to wage sustained military campaigns. Civilian populations were too intimidated to support the violent overthrow of the repressive military regimes they lived under. Where leftist activists were able to defeat the military regimes was in the battle of ideas. As a result, a majority of the victims were ordinary activists such as college students, union leaders, community activists and organizers, indigenous activists, leftist writers and newspaper editors, journalists, leftist college professors, and/or anyone who could articulate an alternative to the U.S. imposed economic order the military regimes were promoting and building.

These were the “disappeared” and “assassinated.” The college students who published an underground leftist newspaper calling for the end of U.S. interference in their country’s affairs and the overthrow of the military regime were the ones tossed from helicopters 10 000 feet over the frozen waters of the South Atlantic oceans. The writer who published a “leftist” tract and the union leader or community activist who organized people and communities to call for redistribution of the country’s stolen wealth and land were the ones gunned

down and participation was to be “disappeared” into the night. The campaigns against leftist activists and movements in Latin America by military regimes were so effective that by 1990, with the exception of Cuba, all of Latin America was governed by conservative right wing governments that continued to preserve and promote U.S. interests in the region while maintaining the status quo within their own countries.

To the outside observer and advocates of right wing rule within Latin America, the free market neoliberal economic order the U.S. imposed on the region appeared firmly entrenched for generations to come. But then something happened. In 1991 the Soviet Union collapsed, removing the U.S. global competitor for supremacy and ending the Cold War. The U.S. pulled back much of its military support and economic aid to right wing Latin American governments as the threat of a communist takeover of Latin America disappeared. Eager to seize the vacuum left by the Soviet Union’s collapse, the U.S. turned its attention to Europe and the Middle East, in a dash to consolidate its hold on these region’s markets and resources. These strategic regions took priority over Latin America. Convinced that the battle of ideas had been won, the left crushed and the people converted to capitalism the U.S. encouraged free elections and democracy. The generals were advised to remain in their barracks and outside the political process. NAFTA was soon signed and there was talk of turning the entire continent into a “free trade” zone so its natural resources and people could be exploited more easily. A new era was at hand for Latin America in the 90’s or so the “rightist” advocates believed.

Some folks on the continent had different



*Zapatistas waving rifles in training*

down in stadiums and secret military prisons. To the military regimes there was no such thing as a peaceful protest or a democratic dialogue on the politics of the country; the consequence for involvement in a peaceful protest or call for democratic

ideas and on January 1, 1994 an indigenous movement rose up in Chiapas, Mexico. Calling themselves Zapatistas, in honor of the Mexican revolutionary Emiliano

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# Good Morning, Mr. President

by Reginald Lewis

You'll rise amid the opulence of the White House, God Willing. Kiss the First Lady, eat breakfast, prepare Sasha and Malia for school, check text messages on your specially designed Blackberry, consult with the cadre of Secret Service Agents about your travel itinerary, and meet with the Vice President, Secretary of State, and the ingenious minds that comprise your brilliantly assembled Cabinet. Later, perhaps you'll meet with the obliging press acolytes, deliver a fiery speech, and sit down with a confraternity of Foreign Diplomats, Dignitaries, and Luminaries. You enjoy high approval ratings because an overwhelming majority of Americans believe you are doing an excellent job. Civil Libertarians and Constitutional Scholars applaud your moral courage to sign the Executive order closing Guantanamo Bay Detention Center in Cuba. But eight long, harrowing years of the Bush Regime waged an hellacious war on the few constitutional productions for the politically powerless inside our "Guantanamo Bays" all across America.

As of April 28, 2008, to the present – 37 newspapers, 203 magazines, 17 newsletters, and over 670 books made the Pennsylvania Department of Corrections "Master Publication Denial List." All God's Children, by Rene Denfield is banned alongside The Muslim Observer, Essence Magazine, all books by the Great Historian J. A. Rogers, and even Carter G. Woodson's The Mis-education of the Negro. And we won't get to read the interview of Michelle Obama – because even O Magazine (Oprah's mag) is banned.

Such denial mirrors the oppressive, time-warped cruelty of the "Puritans" when they set foot on Plymouth Rock. Or the archaic, inhumane, and horrific abuse of the 19th Century "Society for the Suppression of Vice," who severely restricted what could be sent - or received – through the mail.

As a former President of the Harvard Law Review, and a Constitutional Scholar yourself, we're sure you understand our collective sense of outrage. Though the ACLU v. Reno (which established "Free Speech" on the internet) seemed to resolve the question

– it didn't.

On the morning of January 16, 2009 – (a mere four days before your inauguration as the First African-American President of the United States) – we were jolted awake by a crude announcement from Secretary Jeffrey A. Beard, Ph. D: "...prisoners shall not solicit or otherwise commercially advertise for money, services, or goods. Inmates are also specifically prohibited from advertising for pen pals."

Say what? In Canadian Coalition Against the Death Penalty, 269 F. Supp 2d 1199, (D. Ariz, 2003), the District Court of Arizona struck down a similar provision and the statute as "Unconstitutional." The Justices reasoned that because the constitutional rights of both inmates and outsiders were affected, the question becomes whether the regulation "...is reasonably related to legitimate penological objectives, or represents an exaggerated response to those concerns." The CCADP and other groups argued that they had a right to maintain their Internet websites "as an integral part of their advocacy and public education."

Recently, Secretary Beard went before the

State Legislature seeking a 10% increase in the annual 1.8 billion budget. He claims he needs to build more prisons, totaling 9, 937 brand new cells, by 2012.

We sure hope these cells have windows. Because in an ever-expanding age of sophisticated communications systems that connects the Global Community in an instant – he wants to nail shut our dusky little window to the world.

*Reginald Sinclair Lewis is a widely published, award-winning poet, essayist, and a playwright - ON PENNSYLVANIA'S DEATH ROW. He is the author of two collections of poetry, entitled Leaving Death Row, (AuthorHouse, 2000), and Inside My Head, (iUniverse, 2002). His most recent book is Where I'm Writing From: Essays from Pennsylvania's Death Row, (PublishAmerica, 2005). For more information visit: [www.ReginaldSLewis.org](http://www.ReginaldSLewis.org)*

Reginald S. Lewis

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## Human Rights Coalition / FedUp! Courthouse Update Prisoner beats false charges with HRC help

Gary Tucker Found Non-guilty! HRC and Family Support the Deciding Factor

Torture survivor Gary Tucker, a state prisoner currently confined in 23-hour control unit lockdown at SCI Frackville, was found not-guilty of assaulting a prison guard by an all-white jury at the Cumberland County courthouse in Carlisle, PA on Thursday morning.

In an emotional trial which featured gripping testimony by Gary and six other state prisoners-all of whom testified via videoconference-testified that it was in fact Mr. Tucker who was assaulted during the incident in question, and that he only responded to the guards actions to defend himself.

HRC/Fed Up! organized courthouse support and provided witness testimony when Bret Grote took the stand to affirm Mr. Tucker's version of events and speak of the organization's work exposing human rights violations in PA prisons.

In January of 2008 Gary's cell door was opened in the Special Management Unit at SCI Camp Hill after he and a guard had a heated argument. Mr. Tucker exited his cell prepared to defend himself with bars of soap in a sock. After chasing one guard

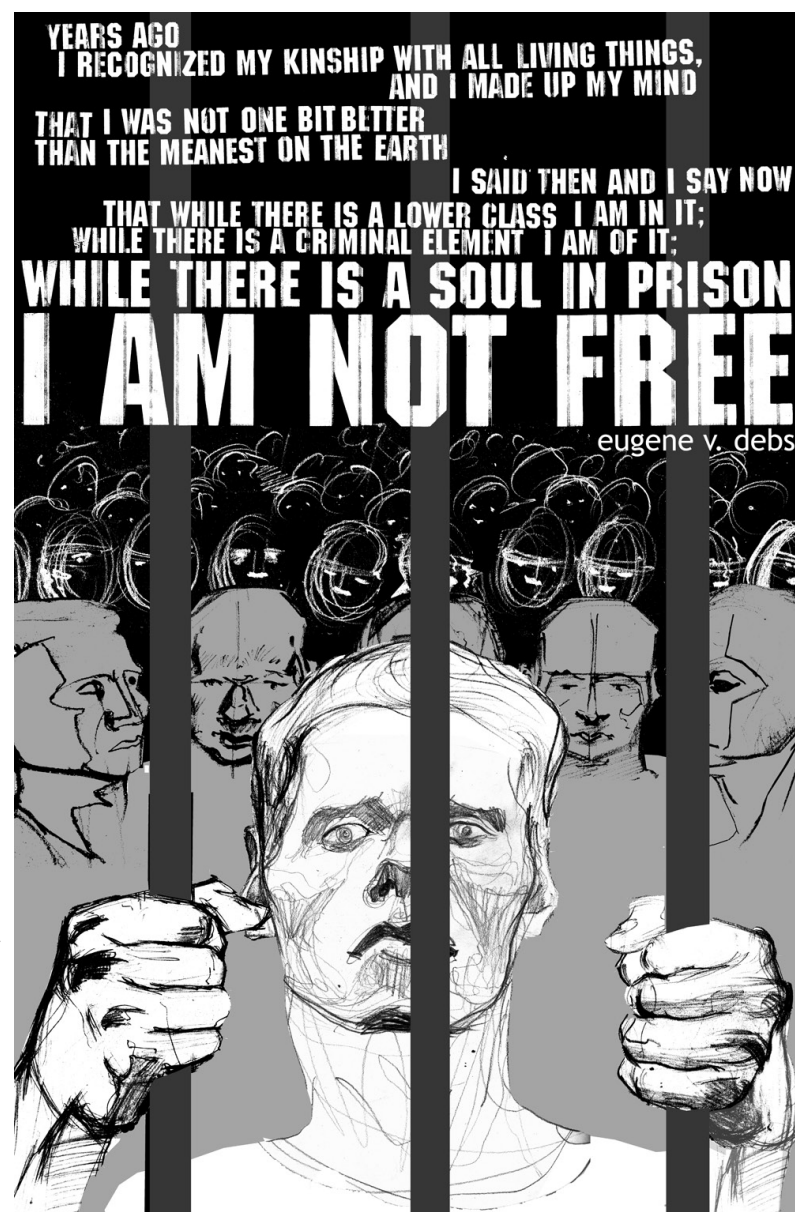
away from his cell he was jumped from behind, subdued, handcuffed, and then dragged into a cell out of camera view and beaten bloody. Mr. Tucker suffered a laceration requiring stitches, lost two teeth, and had a bruised, swollen, and bloody face.

Mr. Tucker filed an excessive force grievance. On June 18, 2008 he was informed that it was denied. The next day guards under the command of Unit Manager Chris Chambers began denying him lunch and dinner. After a week of this he was then denied all three meals for two weeks. He only began receiving food again after several prisoners contacted HRC/Fed Up!, reporting that SMU staff were attempting to starve Gary to death. An action alert was sent out and the prison eventually yielded to the pressure.

Seven months after the January assault the District Attorney's office of Cumberland County brought charges against Gary, claiming he assaulted a guard. The trial began Monday, May 18, 2009.

Mr. Tucker plans on pursuing a lawsuit against Camp Hill and the DOC for the hell they put him through.

Continued next issue





# Leonard Peltier: Silence Screams

by Carolina Saldaña

## The Message

*Silence, they say, is the voice of complicity.  
But silence is impossible.  
Silence screams.  
Silence is a message,  
just as doing nothing is an act.  
Let who you are ring out and resonate  
in every word and deed.  
Yes, become who you are.  
There's no sidestepping your own being  
or your own responsibility.  
What you do is who you are.  
You are your own comeuppance.  
You become your own message.  
You are the message.  
In the spirit of Crazy Horse,  
Leonard Peltier*

## 33 years behind bars!

Native American artist, writer, and activist Leonard Peltier—one of the most widely recognized political prisoners in the world—has spent more than 33 years in some of the cruelest prisons in the United States, unjustly condemned to a double life sentence for the shooting death of two FBI agents in 1975. His situation is now aggravated by health problems.

At the age of 64, despite health problems, he continues to struggle for the rights of indigenous people from his cell in the federal prison at Lewisberg, Pennsylvania. He's contributed to the establishment of libraries, schools, scholarships, and battered women's shelters, among many other projects. In February of 2009, he was nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize for the sixth consecutive year.

## “My crime’s being an Indian. What’s yours?”

In his autobiography *My Life Is My Sun Dance*, Leonard explains that his bloodline is mainly Ojibway and Dakota Sioux and that he was adopted by the Lakota Sioux and raised on their reservations “in the land known to you as America....but I don't consider myself an American.”

“I know what I am. I am an Indian- an Indian who dared to stand up to defend his people. I am an innocent man who never murdered anyone nor wanted to. And, yes, I am a Sun Dancer. That, too, is my identity. If I am to suffer as a symbol of my people, then I suffer proudly. I will never yield.”

Leonard tells us that when he was nine years old a big black government car drove up to his house to take him and the other kids away to the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) boarding school in Wahpeton, Dakota del Norte. When they got there, they cut off their long hair, stripped them, and doused them with DDT powder.



“I thought I was going to die...that place... was more like a reformatory than a school...I consider my years at Wahpeton my first imprisonment, and it was for the same crime as all the others: being an Indian.”

He goes on to say that “We had to speak English. We were beaten if we were caught speaking our own language. Still, we did....I guess that's where I became a 'hardened criminal,' as the FBI calls me. And you could say that the first infraction in my criminal career was speaking my own language. There's an act of violence for you....The second was practicing our traditional religion.”

When Leonard Peltier was a teenager, President Eisenhower launched a program to eliminate the reservations and move the people off, giving them a small payment. Leonard remembers that the words “termination” and “dislocation” became the most feared words in the people's vocabulary. The process of fighting against dislocation was his first experience as an activist.

During the 60s, Leonard worked as a farm worker and later in an auto body shop in Seattle. At that time he got his first taste of community organizing. At the beginning of the 70s, he joined up with the American Indian Movement (AIM), initially inspired by the Black Panthers.

In 1972, he participated in the Trail of Broken Treaties, a march from Alcatraz in California to Washington D.C., culminating with the occupation of the BIA in the nation's capitol. He became a target of the FBI program to “neutralize” AIM leaders and was set up and jailed at the end of the year.

## 1973: The Occupation of Wounded Knee

One of AIM's boldest actions was the occupation of the village of Wounded Knee

on the Pine Ridge Reservation, the same place where the United States Army carried out its cowardly, infamous massacre of 300 Lakota people in 1890.

At the beginning of the 70s, AIM was getting together with the Lakota Indians who were true to their ancient traditions and wanted to hold on to their culture and their lands.

The BIA, worried about AIM's growing influence in the area, appointed Dick Wilson as tribal chairman on the reservation, running roughshod over the will of the traditional elders and chiefs.

The puppet Wilson hated the AIM militants and allied himself with the FBI to destroy the movement that the agency saw as a threat to the American way of life. His paramilitary group known as the "GOONS" (Guardians of the Oglala Nation) had committed a long chain of abuses against the people.

On the night of February 27, around 300 Lakota and 25 AIM members occupied the town of Wounded Knee, joined by several Chicanos, Black, and white supporters. They opposed the murders of Native Americans on the reservation, the extreme poverty that the people lived in and the corrupt tribal government. They demanded that the government respect the ancient treaties signed with native peoples to protect their territory and autonomy. The next day, General Alexander Haig ordered an invasion. According to Ward Churchill and Jim Vanderwall in their book *Agents of Repression*, "In the first instance since the Civil War that the U.S. Army had been dispatched in a domestic operation, the Pentagon invaded Wounded Knee with 17 armored personnel carriers, 130,000 rounds of M-16 ammunition, 41,000 rounds of M-1 ammunition, 24,000 flares, 12 M-79 grenade launchers, 600 cases of C-S gas,

100 rounds of M-40 explosives, helicopters, Phantom jets, and personnel." The operation also relied on 500 heavily armed policemen, federal marshals and BIA and FBI agents. They surrounded Wounded Knee and set up barricades all along the road.

Despite the large show of force, the occupation lasted 71 days and ended only after the government promised to investigate the complaints, something that never happened.

The next three years were known as the “reign of terror” on Pine Ridge. More than 300 people associated with AIM were violently attacked and many of their homes were burned. During these years more than 60 Native American people were killed by paramilitaries armed and trained by the FBI. There was also an increase of FBI SWAT team agents on the reservation.

It's now known, as a result of a suit based on the Freedom of Information Act, that AIM activities on and off the reservation were under FBI surveillance and that the FBI was preparing the paramilitary operations on Pine Ridge a month before the shootout at Oglala.

## Oglala: The fatal shootout

In a situation that was getting worse all the time, the Council of Elders on the Jumping Bull ranch near the town of Oglala asked AIM to come back to the reservation to protect them. Leonard Peltier, along with many other AIM members and non-members responded to the call and set up camp on the ranch.

On June 26, 1975, two FBI agents, Jack Coler and Ron Williams, followed a red



pick-up truck onto the Jumping Bull ranch. They were supposedly looking for young Jimmy Eagle, who was said to have stolen a pair of cowboy boots.

A shootout began between the FBI agents and the people in the pick-up, trapping a family in the crossfire. Several mothers fled the area with their children while other people fired in self-defense. More than 150 FBI SWAT team members, BIA police, and GOONS surrounded approximately 30

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# Shell finally being taken to court over repression and pollution in the Niger Delta

By Ammoch

On May 27th, a landmark trial was set to begin in New York City. The case in question involves a number of Ogoni activists and villagers (Nigeria) who claim that Royal Dutch Shell aided the Nigerian dictatorship, though financial and logistical assistance, in brutally suppressing protest of the company's operations and ecological devastation. Over 15 years have passed as lawyers for both the company and the Ogoni plaintiffs have wrangled over the venue and charges. However May 29th has passed and the trial has not yet begun.

During the early 1990's, a non-violent, popular movement, led by the visionary Ken Saro-Wiwa, mobilized huge numbers of Ogoni to throw Shell out of their homeland in the Niger Delta area of Nigeria. The company had been operating in Nigeria since the late 1950's and has pumped out millions of barrels of oil, gaining billions in profits. Ogoniland, which has massive petroleum deposits in its soil, has seen almost none of the earnings and most residents live in poverty. The Ogoni are hardly ever invited to work in the oil extraction industry; their lands have been polluted by continued spills and gas flaring, and suffer continued military occupation.

As the movement grew, the Nigerian military targeted activists and whole villages. Hundreds were killed and many others fled. During this tumultuous time, Saro-Wiwa and others were falsely arrested, imprisoned, and ultimately executed by the State.

As unfortunate as the fate of Saro-Wiwa and the other Ogoni activists was, their death was not totally in vain; Shell effectively quit Ogoniland and has been gone for the past 15 years. But the legacy of their operations continues...

On March 21st, 2009, residents of Bodo in the Gokana Kingdom of Ogoniland seized a Shell oil manifold in their community.

The protest, attended by some 500 men and women, was held in response to Shell's ongoing neglect and the government to attend to a large offshore spill affecting their community since September, 2008.

From atop the oil manifold, the Youth Council president exhorted the crowd, shouting that they were going to blow up the manifold in a week if Shell didn't bring relief materials and come with a clean-up plan. When asked if taking this action wouldn't give the police an excuse to brand them as militants and come and kill them, he answered: 'Let them come. We are ready for any consequence. If some of us must be killed to make our point, then so be it. We will die just like other Ogoni martyrs before us.'

Shell quit Ogoniland some time ago, but many of the oil pipelines have natural pressure which pushes the oil through, as is the case in Bodo. In essence, Shell gets this oil and has no need to do any maintenance or be available to the community. The burst pipe in question was originally installed in the 1950's. There have been intermittent leaks in Bodo since 2003. The response has been minimal. The company had hired scarecrow remedia-

tion companies owned by local strongmen who had no expertise, or had simply done nothing.

Behind the oil manifold enclosure, some 500 yards down a path is the marsh. Total destruction. There is a line a foot high on the grass where the oil rose. Everything is dead for as far as the eye can see.

After the protest, a group of over 50 women gathered and began shouting their grievances in Ogoni. Via an interpreter from the Youth Council, two matriarchs were chosen to represent the group. They detailed how

there was widespread hunger and thirst in the community: all the fish had been killed, the water contaminated, access to the creeks blocked and the ground-soil polluted and crops poisoned. One woman presented a meager basket of cassava meant to feed her family for a week. It was only enough for one

person. Another woman pushed forward and said her eight-year-old son had died of hunger.

A higher up in the Youth Council, the same one who had been interpreting, told of his frustrations and how he felt control slipping out of his hands. He said it was getting im-

possible to calm the youth in the town and that he was sure some of them would slip into militancy and armed action. 'A hungry man is an angry man,' he said. If they blow up the oil manifold next week, it might be one step in this dreaded direction.

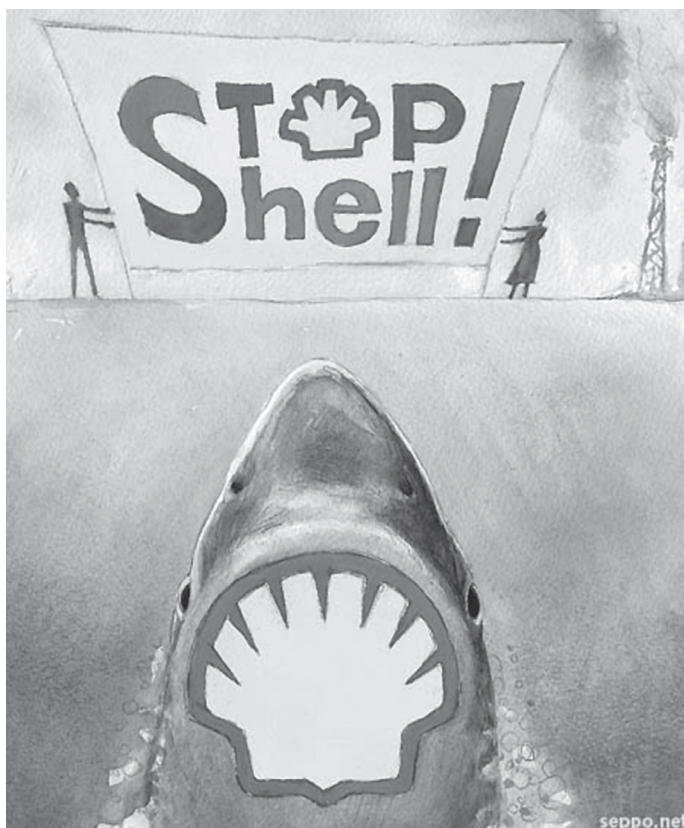
It is crucial that this trial take place. There have been whispers lately that Shell is desperately trying to settle the matter out of court. They have been pursuing this strategy for months now, attempting to pay off some of the plaintiffs and avoid continued humiliation (and likely a much larger ruling). It is unclear how this case is going to proceed, if at all, but it is clear that the longer the issue stays in the public eye the better. As the above story about Bodo shows, Shell has an utter disregard for the communities that provide them with such wealth. The more people know and the more pressure that Shell is subjected to, the more likely they are to clean up their act.

For more information visit:  
[nigerdeltaunrest.blogspot.com](http://nigerdeltaunrest.blogspot.com)  
[wiwavshell.org](http://wiwavshell.org)  
[ShellGuilty.com](http://ShellGuilty.com)

## UPDATE: June 8, 2009

Royal Dutch Shell Forced to Settle Human Rights Case Out of Court.

After legal battles lasting nearly fourteen years, oil giant Royal Dutch Shell has been forced to pay a \$15.5 million out-of-court settlement. Plaintiffs from the Ogoni region of the Niger Delta have successfully held Shell accountable for complicity in human rights atrocities committed against the Ogoni people in the 1990s, including the execution of writer and activist Ken Saro-Wiwa. The legal action is one of the few cases brought under the U.S. Alien Tort Statute that have been resolved in favor of the plaintiffs. The settlement includes establishment of a \$5 million trust to benefit local communities in Ogoni.



## Neighbors Fight Pool Closures

By Sean West

School is out and summer is here, but something is missing for 28 neighborhoods in Philadelphia. Their neighborhood pools, where kids take a dip to cool down during the summer, will be closed. The struggle to save the pools is reminiscent of the beginnings of the victorious movement to save the branch libraries. Communities that are losing pools have begun

hosting rallies in their own 'hoods to speak out against the closures. Already Point Breeze had a lively rally for Chew Pool and Grays Ferry stood strong for Stinger Square. With the humid and hot months ahead of us one can only expect more rallies with neighborhoods doing whatever it takes to keep the pools open.

Additionally, The Coalition for Essential Services has launched a No

Cuts for Kids campaign focusing on the pool closures as well as the elimination of many summer camp programs and the loss of hundreds of seasonal youth jobs that were funded through the city.

Mayor Nutter and City Council have chosen to balance the budget on the backs of kids, seniors, neighborhoods and city workers. Let's make it a long, hot summer for them!





# Stamps of Approval

Some things have come out that deserve a plug:

## Promissory Notes: from Crisis to Commons

### A pamphlet on the crisis by Midnight Notes and Friends

*After five hundred years of existence, capitalists are once again announcing to us that their system is in crisis. They are urging everyone to make sacrifices to save its life. We*

*are told that if we do not make these sacrifices, we together face the prospect of a mutual shipwreck. Such threats should be taken seriously. Already in every part of the planet, workers are paying the price of the crisis in retrenchment, mass unemployment, lost pensions, foreclosures, and death.*

#### PROMISSORY NOTES FROM CRISIS TO COMMONS

MIDNIGHT NOTES COLLECTIVE  
AND FRIENDS



providing some useful historical background and concludes with thoughts on revolutionary struggles that move beyond capital. The left in general (like most of the country) has been caught in this economic crisis largely unprepared. Promissory Notes may be the a good jumping off point for folks interested in figuring out our place in midst of this mess.

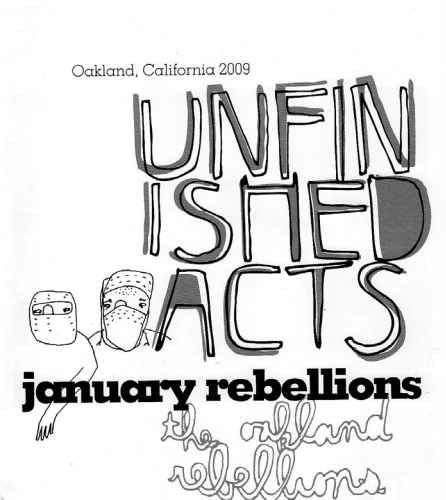
You can download Promissory Notes at [http://defenestrator.org/promissory\\_notes](http://defenestrator.org/promissory_notes)  
Midnight Notes website can be found at: <http://www.midnightnotes.org>

Some more bits on the crisis compiled by a local reading group on the crisis can be found here: <http://econcrisisphilly.blogspot.com/>

## Unfinished Acts – January Rebellions

A great pamphlet on the experience of some comrades in the East Bay from the January riots following the point blank execution of Oscar Grant by the Oakland PD this New Years. The authors share their experiences in the streets during the rebellion, provide some background on Oakland street culture and political scene and explore some of the attempts from the state and the NGOized left to contain and derail spontaneous angry protests by Oakland youth and other uncontrollable political groupings. This pamphlet should be read by anyone who anticipates the moment when Philly explodes. Numerous scenarios in the Unfinished Acts have all the hallmarks of a Philly rebellion. Lessons we can all learn from.

Pick it up at Wooden Shoe Books.



## Upping the Anti #8

I should also mention the recent issue of Upping the Anti, a Canadian autonomous journal in which Philadelphians and def contributors Dan Berger and Suzy Subways contributed some interesting pieces. Dan's piece on Study groups, a round table interview with different groups across the US, may speak to the dozen or so radical study groups sprinkled around Philly who are attempting to put their discussing into praxis. Suzy's round table on the experiences of women from the Student Liberation Action Movement will definitely speak to those of us who've struggled with building multi-racial and multi-tendency organizations. SLAM had fought against tuition increases at CUNY in NY and later joined the struggles to free Mumia Abu Jamal, and against police violence in NY and faced off with cops with us here in Philly during the 2000 RNC. Conversations with SLAM feel especially relevant these days in Philly where a number of younger activists have been struggling with similar issues in current political work. Again, pick it up at Wooden Shoe Books. The SLAM piece can be found at [http://defenestrator.org/SLAM\\_interviews](http://defenestrator.org/SLAM_interviews) , which is part of a larger project of documenting the group's herstory which can be found at <http://slamherstory.wordpress.com> .

### UPPING THE ANTI

...a journal of theory and action...



number eight

IN THIS ISSUE: DAVID McNALLY, SAM GINDIN, AND LEO PANTICH ON THE ECONOMIC MELTDOWN @ DEBORAH GOULD ON THE LEGACY OF ACT UP @ HELEN HUDSON ON MOVEMENT DEVELOPMENT @ JOHN CLARKE ON THE FIGHT AGAINST POVERTY @ SHOURIDH MOLAVI ON THE CRISIS IN GAZA @ SIBBU PASTERNAK ON THE STRUGGLE AT BARRERE LAKE @ ROUNDTABLE RETROSPECTIVE ON THE STUDENT LIBERATION ACTION MOVEMENT @ ROUNDTABLE ON ACTIVIST STUDY GROUPS @ BOOK REVIEWS AND MORE...

# NJ 4 Update: Innocent Black Lesbians Back Serving Jail Time Without Committing a Crime

In the summer of 2006, seven young Black lesbians from New Jersey—Patreese Johnson, Renata Hill, Venice Brown, Terrain Dandridge, Chenese Loyal, Lania Daniels, and Khamysha Coates—were hanging out on the pier in New York City's West Village when Dwayne Buckle, a man selling DVDs on the street, sexually propositioned Patreese. Refusing to take no for an answer, he followed them down the street, insulting and threatening them: “I’ll \*\*\*\* you straight, sweetheart!”

It is important to understand that all seven women knew of another young woman named Sakia Gunn, who had been stabbed to death under very similar circumstances—by a pair of highly aggressive, verbally abusive male strangers. At least some of the seven had known Sakia personally.

During the resulting confrontation, Buckle first spat in Renata’s face and threw his lit

cigarette at her, then he yanked another’s hair, pulling her towards him, and then began strangling Renata. A fight broke out, during which Patreese Johnson, 4 feet 11 inches tall and 95 pounds, produced a small knife from her bag to stop Buckle from choking her friend—a knife she carried to protect herself when she came home alone from her late-night job.

Two male onlookers, one of whom had a knife, ran over to physically deal with Buckle in order to help the women. Buckle, who ended up hospitalized for five days with stomach and liver lacerations, initially reported on at least two occasions that the men—not the women—had attacked him. What’s more, Patreese’s knife was never tested for DNA, the men who beat Buckle were never questioned by police, and the whole incident was captured on surveillance video. Yet the women ended up on trial for attempted murder. Dwayne Buckle

testified against them.

The media coverage was savage, calling the women such things as a “wolf pack of lesbians.” The pro bono lawyers for the young lesbians would later have to buy the public record of the case since the judge, Edward J. McLaughlin (who openly taunted and expressed contempt for the women in front of the jury all throughout the trial), would not release it. As of late August 2007, the defense team still didn’t have a copy of the security camera video footage. And after the better part of one year spent sitting in jail, four of the seven women were sentenced in June 2007—reportedly by an all-white jury of mostly women—to jail terms ranging from 3 1/2 to 11 years. The oldest of the women was 24, and two of them are mothers of small children.

In early May Renata returned to prison per her plea bargain and so two of these women

are still held captive for defending their existence and insisting on survival as Black lesbians under hetero-patriarchy. Send them yr love and kindness at:

Renata Hill 07-G-0636 Albion Correctional Facility 3595 State Road Albion, NY 14411-9399

Patreese Johnson #07-G-0635 Bedford Hills Correctional Facility P.O. Box 1000 Bedford Hills, NY 10507

These sisters need letters sent to governor David Patterson demanding their clemency and they need funds for their commissary and legal defense funds. For the most up-to-date information see <http://fiercencyc.org/index.php?s=128> and please check out the video, The Fire This Time, about the case at <http://thefirethistimethefilm.com/>



# Real Utopia:

## Participatory Society for the 21st Century

Edited by Chris Spannos

Review by James Generic

"Real Utopia: Participatory Economics for the 21st Century", edited by Chris Spannos, is a collection of essays by a multitude of authors who have developed Participatory Economic (Parecon) theory, used it in real collective work, and have written extensively in defense of participatory economics. It is divided into 3 sections. The section on theory explores how Parecon could be used in a future post-capitalist world, how Parecon can be used in places outside the US like Africa, the Balkans, or Argentina, and applying Parecon theory to historical examples like the Russian and Spanish Revolutions, and Social Democracy in the 20th century. Parecon in practice examines current examples like South End Press, Mondragon Bookstore and Cafe in Winnipeg, the New standard magazine, the Vancouver Parecon Collective, and the Austin Project for Participatory Society. The final section examines how to incorporate Parecon into larger social movements and fights for social justice and a new world.

Parecon is an economic school of thought coming from libertarian socialist and anarchist political traditions which opposes traditional liberal economics and centrally planned economies. It seems to argue three basic things.

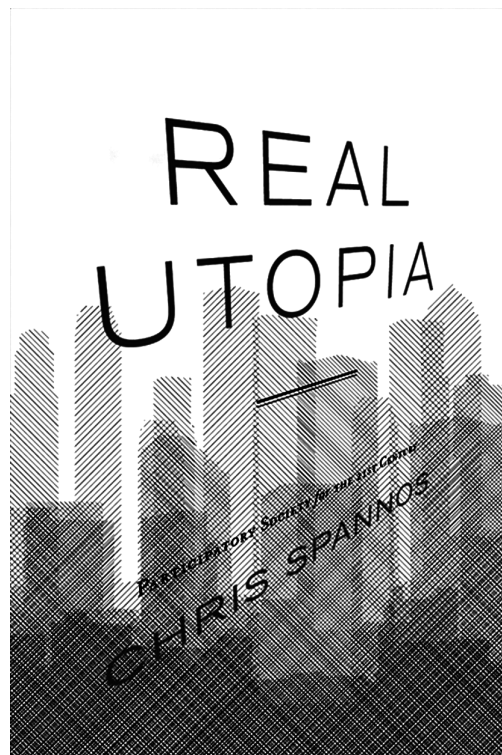
The first is that in society, there is a capitalist class, a working class, and a coordinator class, updating Marxist work

of dividing the entirety of society into bourgeois and proletarian classes, with all else being outside the historical class struggle. Parecon argues that, in modern capitalism, this really leaves out a class consisting of people like professors, professionals, managers, supervisors, police, small business owners and other people who do not own large means of production, but do in fact have powers over the working class as the experts of society. This is known as "the coordinator class."

The second part of "Real Utopia" explores future economies, and argues that society should be run by a mixture of workers' councils running workplaces, and consumers' councils determining how to distribute goods and materials. Neighborhood organizations would also run neighborhoods, with any delegation being recallable. In addition, boards would plan out further economics.

"Rote" work (or "shitwork") and "empowering" work (enjoyable work) is regularly rotated. Participatory economics originated between work of Robin Hahnel and Michael Albert, and much of it came from direct experience working in collectives. They try to emphasize deconstructing gender roles, ecology, democratic processes, fair distribution, balancing talent, time, education, and empowering work.

Before I read this book, I didn't really understand Participatory Economics beyond



the really bare essentials, and couldn't really read Michael Albert's dry texts. The basics that I was familiar with seemed a little wonkish, even utopian. The only thing that I took away from Participatory Economics was the "coordinator class" theory, which really helped explain the co-optation of social movements over time. Reading this helps it make more sense, especially in how people can apply it in everyday life.

I especially liked the section on Parecon in practice, as someone who's worked in collectives for years and didn't realize that we were using forms of Parecon already. It certainly helps to emphasize shifting tasks around between the non-glorious rote work that is the meat and potatoes of any successful project, and the acknowledged tasks like dealing with press or being a recognized voice in the organization.

Parecon also specifically leaves out how to arrive at such economics in society, since it does not call for a state takeover or even gradual reforms, but a vague confrontation with social institutions, probably a better strategy since anyone who says they have 100% of a blueprint is full of shit. Some of the criticisms I've heard from anarcho-syndicalists, is that a Parecon world would be overly bureaucratized and too technical. There might be some validity to that argument when Parecon is presented in its purest theoretical form, but as a basic philosophy, I'm starting to think that it has merits to learn from.

Of course, the question remains how to get to such a society? The aphorism "building a new world in the shell of the old" seems to be what Parecon advocates, but what about repression? Perhaps that is not really in the realm of Parecon, that it simply wishes to deal with the economics and political questions, not how to deal with confrontations with the old order. So much of the literature of the Left criticises existing systems and has less to say on what to do afterwards beyond vagaries. Chris Spannos did a wonderful job assembling essays dealing with how organizing another world would work from the bottom up, with the thought in mind that smashing capitalism or the state does not solve the world's problems in a day. One needs to take a good look at what sort of society you'd want to live in and take steps to try to achieve that society, here and in the future.

## Argentinian Factory Occupation continued from page 5

The current government of President Cristina Fernandez de Kirchner has bolstered that unemployment has gone done from the staggering numbers post-2001 crisis. Many of those jobs are subcontracted and underpaid. Official unemployment statistics, which have been under fire for being conveniently inaccurate, report unemployment at 8 percent. However, many independent analysts say that the actual rate is much higher. Eduardo Lucita, economist from Economists of the Left said that analysts don't have exact numbers because many of the firings are of workers without formal contracts and can't be tracked. "Argentina has already had a crisis in the financial sector in 2001. The current crisis is directly affecting Argentina's real economy. Since October, there are more than 50,000 people who are now unemployed. There have been mass firings, lay-offs and pay cuts."

### Workers Paying for the Crisis

In the failing economy, the jobs at FASINPAT are more important than ever. But the government seems to have all but forgotten that the recuperated enterprises and worker cooperatives provide nearly 20,000 jobs for Argentina, while the government has failed to provide a long-term legal solution to the workers without bosses or subsidies that standard businesses regularly have access to.

Another factor in the struggle at FASINPAT is the lack of subsidies for the cooperative. Sales have dropped by 40-50 percent since 2008 due to a radical slow-down in the construction industry nationally.

"Because of the drop in construction, we aren't producing as much," says Paris. In 2006, the plant produced 400,000 square meters of ceramics per month, today that number has gone down to 150,000 square meters per month. The cooperative has had to shut off some of the ovens and shorten production shifts. On top of this drop; the workers controlling the factory have had to face sky-rocketing energy prices. The workers pay over 300,000 dollars a month for electricity and gas. And for Paris, the workers should not have to pay more than other businesses do: "Many industry leaders get government energy subsidies up to 70 percent. We want to buy directly from the gas companies to lower our costs or receive subsidies that we are entitled to."

Many of the 200 worker controlled businesses and factories in Argentina are being affected by the crisis. But unlike their capitalist counterparts, the worker cooperatives are taking any measure possible to avoid laying off workers, something which they are opposed to doing.

"We aren't like the capitalists. You can't throw workers out like they are lice," said Candido Gonzalez, a veteran worker from Chilavert worker occupied print factory in Buenos Aires, one of the first occupied plants after the 2001 crisis.

During the Argentina's financial crisis in 2001, he occupied his workplace and fought until he and his fellow workers won legal recognition. Now that business is slowing down, many assemblies at the worker occupied factories would rather accept collective pay cuts, than their fellow workers lose their jobs.

### When Capitalism Fails – Occupy, Resist and Produce

Capitalism has taken a turn for the worse, spinning itself out of control into a downward spiral which many are characterizing as the second depression of the century. And during this crisis, there are going to be winners and losers. The winners? Most likely big business and banks receiving bailout plans. The losers? The millions who are facing unemployment, dropping wages and inflation.

"During a capitalist crisis, when the businessmen and governments are trying to unload all their responsibilities onto the workers of the world, Zanon under worker self-management, is a clear example of how workers can come out of this crisis," say the workers at FASINPAT.

Since late 2008 there have been several new factory takeovers in Argentina. Many workers from the newly occupied factories say that their bosses saw the crisis as the perfect opportunity to clear their debts by closing up shop, fraudulently liquidating assets, firing workers and later re-start production under a new firm.

"[However] Many companies are still open because they are afraid of the recovered factory phenomenon; we have to keep them scared," said Paris from Zanon. In almost all of the newly recuperated factories, the workers suggest that the owners had no real reason to close up shop – meaning that the businesses had production demand. I have heard workers on numerous occasions say that during the crisis, the bosses are taking advantage of the situation of a recession.

The worker controlled factories and businesses occupied after 2001 may not be by themselves a social revolution, but the example of worker self-management has helped many workers today facing the possibility of losing their jobs with the idea that they can occupy their workplace in order to defend their rights as laborers. Nearly 10 factories have been occupied since 2008. This may be a sign that workers are confronting the global financial crisis with lessons and tools from previous worker occupied factories. Strategically, the previous worker occupied factories have been fundamental in providing advice of all kinds, including legal, political, production and moral.

For many at the recuperated enterprises, the occupation of their workplace meant much more than safe-guarding their jobs, it also became part of a struggle for a world without exploitation.

"The recuperated enterprises are working to change society. We are changing the way of working, working without exploitation and show workers that we can function without bosses," says Jorge Suarez from Hotel BAUEN, an operating worker occupied hotel in down town Buenos Aires.

Argentina's worker factory takeovers reflect a strategy of workers defending their rights and taking hold of their own destiny. Hard times require desperate measures – and one measure may be for workers to occupy, resist and produce.

Marie Trigona is a writer, radio producer and filmmaker based in Argentina. She can be reached at mtrigona@msn.com



# Repression Against NAFTA's Refugees

by Dave Onion & Lillian Goodman



Luis Ramirez moments shortly before his death

Last month, in Shenandoah, PA, just a couple hours drive from Philly, an all white jury dismissed murder charges against 4 white high school students accused of killing Luis Ramirez. Last July, Ramirez, a young Mexican living in Shenandoah, had been waiting to meet up with his fiancée and sister when four football players from the local high school picked a fight, interspersing racist epithets with punches and kicks. The four took turns beating Ramirez. Once Ramirez was beaten to the ground, a final kick cracked his skull. He died in the hospital the next day from the injuries. In contrast with Ramirez' brutal treatment, his killers were handled with velvet gloves. Not only did the police wait 13 days before arresting the 4 racist teenagers (in a town of hardly 5000), but they received almost unimaginable support from locals and were then released with simple assault and some charges related to underage drinking. Though some mobilized to show support for immigrants now under increased attack in the Shenandoah area, the incident also sprung a groundswell of unrestrained racism among locals. In many cases seemingly influenced by an articulate presence of organized white supremacists. Without a doubt, some marginal groups like the Keystone State Skinheads (now Keystone United), and other white supremacists, are making noticeable efforts to tone down their thug identities to connect with more mainstream racist organizations like the police or the Minutemen.<sup>1</sup> The election of Barack Obama seems to have given some of these groups a good deal of additional fuel, with a serious increase in white supremacist organizing lately, and an influx of very open racism increasingly directed towards African Americans and other non-immigrant minorities. As ethnic tension and racism rises, and murderers are set free, the immigrant population continues to grow. According to some, North America is experiencing

the largest migration of people in recorded history. Up until recently, approximately 1 million people cross the US-Mexico border through the southwest desert of what is now called Arizona each year. Much of this can be attributed to the North America Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), a trade agreement between the governments of Canada, the U.S. and Mexico. NAFTA has served to destroy environmental standards, labor standards, tariffs on trade and many social gains that were fought for by social movements to protect working people from capitalism's excesses. At the same time, NAFTA protects intellectual property rights, and ensures that commodities sold by corporations can move across borders as easily and profitably as possible.

One of the most broadly felt effects of NAFTA in Mexico has been the decrease in the price of corn. Since NAFTA was signed in 1994, Mexican corn has had to compete on the market with U.S. corn sold at prices cheaper than it is possible to even produce because of U.S. government subsidy. While the corn prices decreased, the price of tortillas made of that corn more than doubled. Corn is a primary staple in Mexico and some use a phrase "sin maiz, no hay pais" (without corn there is no country). Free Trade has aggressively dismantled many parts of Mexico's domestic economy while the US has prospered. One migrant, while testifying in court in the US after being apprehended by border patrol, explained that he could earn more money working for one day in the U.S. than he could earn in one month back home in Mexico. The choice seems clear. Or rather, the absence of choice. Locally, the killers of Luis Ramirez are set free despite the crime they committed, internationally NAFTA is killing the domestic economy of Mexico and creating millions of economic NAFTA refugees who to survive in a cut throat economy need to follow the capital.

But in the midst of the greatest economic crisis since the Great Depression, the land of opportunity is not as plentiful. In fact, many immigrants currently working in the U.S. or coming in search of work will return to Mexico in the face of a shrinking economy. Some predict that up to 3 million people will return to Mexico in the first half of 2009. Although up to 35 million people in Mexico rely on remittances (money sent home from workers in the US), that amount of money is down by \$1 billion since 2008. The challenge that is faced at home is the same as in the US...jobs. The Mexican government promised job creation under the Calderon administration, however the growth rate has been 0. Without opportunities in the US or Mexico, the consequences felt by these workers and their families are undeniable.

But while Luis Ramirez' death made headlines and made hearts sink, and while some are still riding on a hopeful high from Obama's victory in D.C., it's crucial to remember that the most far reaching acts of violence still emanate from the nation's capitol. In the last few months especially, the Department of Homeland Security's Immigration and Custom Enforcement (ICE) has shown no signs of post-racial policy changes when it comes to immigration. Instead, DHS Secretary Janet Napolitano has upped pressure on employers hiring undocumented immigrants with a new series of fines and charges for employers. This along with the Labor department's suspension of Bush's guest worker program could be creating a whole new level of legal hell for immigrants in the U.S.

The integral role that undocumented labor has in the domestic US economy is undeniable. Meat packing plants in the midwest advertise employment opportunities in Mexico. As of 2006, undocumented workers made up 58% of the agricultural labor force (Fernandez, 2007). The film, "A Day Without A Mexican" highlights life in southern California without 1/3 of the population who are Mexican or Chicano. Despite the satirical tone, this film speaks to larger issues that are often denied attention. That the business elite and the enfranchised population of the US rely heavily on workers who are much more vulnerable to being exploited.

## Changes in the PPD and Ramsey's role

Up until recently, Philly was a relatively safe place for an immigrant without papers. Though not an official "Sanctuary City"<sup>2</sup>, Philly ran under a "policy of non-inquiry" which meant if stopped by police or arrested, Immigration would only be notified at the arrestees' request, or if federally mandated. A May 2001 Philadelphia Police department memo

specifically instructed police to lay off informing Immigration unless asked specifically to by Feds. A 2003 City Council Resolution introduced by Councilperson Ortiz made a point to refresh that directive in the post September 11th climate, a direct affront to the Patriot Act. That all seemed to change with the arrival of the Nutter administration. Ramsey's appointment as police chief roughly coincides with the PPD and ICE quietly linking their computer networks last July, a discovery that turned up to the surprise of lawyers during a recent immigration case. According to local immigrant advocates, there has been a marked increase in immigration arrests ending in deportation hearings initiated by the non ICE cops since last summer.

Simultaneously, the Obama administration has also chosen to escalate state pressure on immigrants. Currently a program introduced originally by the Bush administration, linking databases at local jails to federal immigration databases, is being expanded by the Obama administration. Through this program, local police forces become an extension of Immigration and Customs Enforcement. If the person arrested is deportable for any reason, they can be turned over to ICE without ever being released from custody.

On the streets, this translates into almost random disappearances. One can be pulled over driving to work, or taken in any reason from driving a sketchy vehicle, to being involved in a fight. Before any criminal charges or arrest record is entered into the computer, the person is run through the ICE database as part of the routine harassment. If they're tagged with something as banal as having their visa expire, police hold them until ICE picks them up. At this point the person enters an ambiguous legal limbo with hardly any recourse. Supporters, family, and lawyers have less access or power.

continued on page 18





# Media, Revolution, and the Legacy of the Black Panther Party

## An interview with Kiilu Nyasha

By Hans Bennett

Kiilu Nyasha is a San Francisco-based journalist and former member of the Black Panther Party (BPP). Kiilu hosts a weekly TV program, "Freedom Is A Constant Struggle," on SF Live (Comcast 76 and AT&T 99), which can be viewed live at [www.accessf.org](http://www.accessf.org) every Friday at 10:30 pm (EST), and rebroadcast Saturdays at 6:30 p.m., and Mondays, 9:30 p.m. She writes for several publications, including the SF Bay View Newspaper and BlackCommentator.com. Also an accomplished radio programmer, she has worked for KPFA (Berkeley), SF Liberation Radio, Free Radio Berkeley, and KPOO in SF. Some of her work is archived at [www.kpfa.org](http://www.kpfa.org) and [www.myspace.com/official\\_kiilu](http://www.myspace.com/official_kiilu)

This is an edited interview, featuring excerpts from Nyasha's article: "Ruchell Cinque Magee and the August 7th Courthouse Slave Rebellion" online at [http://defenestrator.org/kiilu\\_nyasha\\_interview](http://defenestrator.org/kiilu_nyasha_interview)

HB: Your recent Black Commentator article titled "Black August 2008" focused on the legacy of the late prison author and BPP leader, George Jackson, who was assassinated by guards at San Quentin Prison on August 21, 1971.

KN: I initiated a correspondence with George in early 1971, and months later, got a one-hour visit in the holding cell of San Quentin. I've met no one before or since more dedicated to revolutionary change. George's book of prison letters, Soledad Brother, was a best seller, and his second book, Blood In My Eye, had just been finished at the time of his death, and was published posthumously.

George was one of the three "Soledad Brothers," whose story began on January 13, 1970 when a tower guard at Soledad State Prison shot and killed three Black captives on the yard, leaving them unattended to bleed to death: Cleveland Edwards, "Sweet Jugs" Miller, and W. L. Nolen, all active resisters in the Black Movement behind the walls. Others included George Jackson, Jeffrey Gaudin, Hugo L.A. Pinell, Steve Simmons, Howard Tole, and the late Warren Wells.

After the common verdict of "justifiable homicide" was returned and the killer guard exonerated at Soledad, another

white-racist guard was beaten and thrown from a tier to his death in retaliation. Fleeta Drumgo, John Clutchette, and Jackson were charged with his murder, and became known as The Soledad Brothers. A campaign to free them was led by college professor Angela Davis, and George's brother Jonathan. The three were awaiting trial, with a mandatory death sentence if convicted, at the time of George's death.

HB: You wrote that we should honor Jackson's legacy by working to free two California prisoners: Hugo "Yogi Bear" Pinell and Ruchell "Cinque" Magee. Currently housed in Pelican Bay State Prison's notorious "Security Housing Unit," Pinell has been in continuous solitary confinement since at least 1971. On January 14, 2009, Pinell was denied parole for 15 years, a virtual re-sentencing.

KN: The book titled "The Melancholy History of Soledad Prison," by Min Yee, documents how Hugo Pinell was one of the original members of the Black Movement, led by George Jackson and others in Soledad Prison. At that time, it wasn't safe for Blacks to walk the yard. The collusion between the racist, KKK-type guards and white racist prison gangs was horrendous. These conditions were horrible.

Yogi was eventually transferred to San Quentin, and was there on August 21, 1971, when George was assassinated. That day, in what was described by prison officials as an escape attempt, George allegedly smuggled a gun into San Quentin in a wig. That feat was proven impossible, and evidence subsequently suggested a setup designed by prison officials to eliminate Jackson once and for all as they had tried numerous times. On that fateful day, three notoriously racist prison guards and two inmate turnkeys were also killed. According to an eye-witness, when Jackson was shot while running on the yard, he got up instantly and dove in the direction of some bushes. He was subsequently murdered while lying on the ground wounded.

Six Black prisoners were charged with murder and assault. Hugo Pinell, Fleeta Drumgo, David Johnson, Luis Talamantez, Johnny Spain, and Willie Sundiata Tate became known as the "San Quentin Six." Johnny Spain was the only one convicted of murder. The others were either acquitted or convicted of assault. Hugo is the only

one remaining in prison, and badly needs our support.

HB: Tell us about Ruchell Magee.

KN: I first met Ruchell in the holding cell of the Marin County courthouse in the Summer of 1971. I found him to be soft-spoken, warm and a gentleman in typically Southern tradition. We've been in correspondence pretty much ever since.



I was then working for The Sun Reporter, and covering the pretrial hearings of Angela Davis and Ruchell Magee. By 1971, Ruchell was an astute jailhouse lawyer. He was responsible for the release and protection of a myriad of prisoners benefiting from his extensive knowledge of law, which he used to prepare writs, appeals and lawsuits for himself and many others behind the walls.

Ruchell was fighting charges of murder, conspiracy to murder, kidnap, and conspiracy to aid the escape of state prisoners. Although critically wounded on August 7, 1970, he was the sole survivor among the four brave Black men who conducted the courthouse slave rebellion, leaving him to be charged with everything they could throw at him. On August 7, 17-year old Jonathan Jackson raided the Marin Courtroom and tossed guns to prisoners William Christmas and James McClain, who in turn invited Ruchell to join them. Rue seized the hour spontaneously as they attempted to escape by taking a judge, assistant district attorney and three jurors as hostages in that audacious move to expose to the public the brutally racist prison conditions and free the Soledad Brothers. McClain was on trial for assaulting a guard in the wake of Black prisoner Fred Billingsley's murder by prison officials in San Quentin in February, 1970. With only four months before a parole hearing, Magee had appeared in the courtroom to testify for McClain.

The four revolutionaries successfully commandeered the group to the waiting van and were about to pull out of the parking lot when Marin County Police and San Quentin guards opened fire. When the shooting stopped, Judge Harold Haley, Jackson, Christmas, and McClain lay dead; Magee was unconscious and seriously wounded as was the prosecutor. A juror suffered a minor injury. Magee had already spent at least seven

years studying law and deluging the courts with petitions and lawsuits to contest his own illegal conviction in two fraudulent trials. As he put it, the judicial system "used fraud to hide fraud" in his second case after the first conviction was overturned on an appeal based on a falsified transcript. His strategy, therefore, centered on proving that he was a slave, denied his constitutional rights and held involuntarily. Therefore, he had the legal right to escape slavery as established in the case of the African slave, Cinque, who had escaped the slave ship, Amistad, and won freedom in a Connecticut trial. Thus, Magee had to first prove he'd been illegally and unjustly incarcerated for over seven years. He also wanted the case moved to the Federal Courts and the right to represent himself.

Moreover, Magee wanted to conduct a trial that would bring to light the racist and brutal oppression of Black prisoners throughout the State. "My fight is to expose the entire system, judicial and prison system, a system of slavery. This will cause benefit not just to myself but to all those who at this time are being criminally oppressed or enslaved by this system."

On the other hand, Angela Davis, his co-defendant, charged with buying the guns used in the raid, conspiracy, etc., was innocent of any wrongdoing because the gun purchases were perfectly legal and she was not part of the original plan. Davis' lawyers wanted an expedient trial to prove her innocence on trumped up charges. This conflict in strategy resulted in the trials being separated. Davis was acquitted of all charges and released in June of 1972. Ruchell fought on alone, losing much of the support attending the Davis trial. After dismissing five attorneys and five judges, he won the right to defend himself. The murder charges had been dropped, and Magee faced two kidnap charges. He was ultimately convicted of PC 207, simple kidnap, but the more serious charge of PC 209, kidnap for purposes of extortion, resulted in a disputed verdict. According to one of the juror's sworn affidavit, the jury voted for acquittal on the PC 209 and Magee continues to this day to challenge the denial and cover-up of that acquittal.

Ruchell is currently on the mainline of Corcoran State Prison doing his 46th year locked up in California gulags – many of those years spent in solitary confinement



under tortuous conditions! In spite of having committed no physical assaults or murders. Is that not political?

HB: Let’s conclude with a quote from George Jackson.

KN: He wrote in Blood In My Eye: “Settle your quarrels, come together, understand the reality of our situation, understand that fascism is already here, that people are dying who could be saved, that generations more will live poor butchered half-lives if you fail to act. Do what must be done, discover your humanity and your love in revolution.”

Hans Bennett is an independent multi-media journalist ([www.insubordination.blogspot.com](http://www.insubordination.blogspot.com)) and co-founder of Journal-ists for Mumia Abu-Jamal ([www.abu-jamal-news.com](http://www.abu-jamal-news.com)). Special thanks to Ed Mertex for help transcribing the interview.

# Philadelphia Narcotics Squad Officers Accused of Sexual Assault, Bodega Raids

by eian

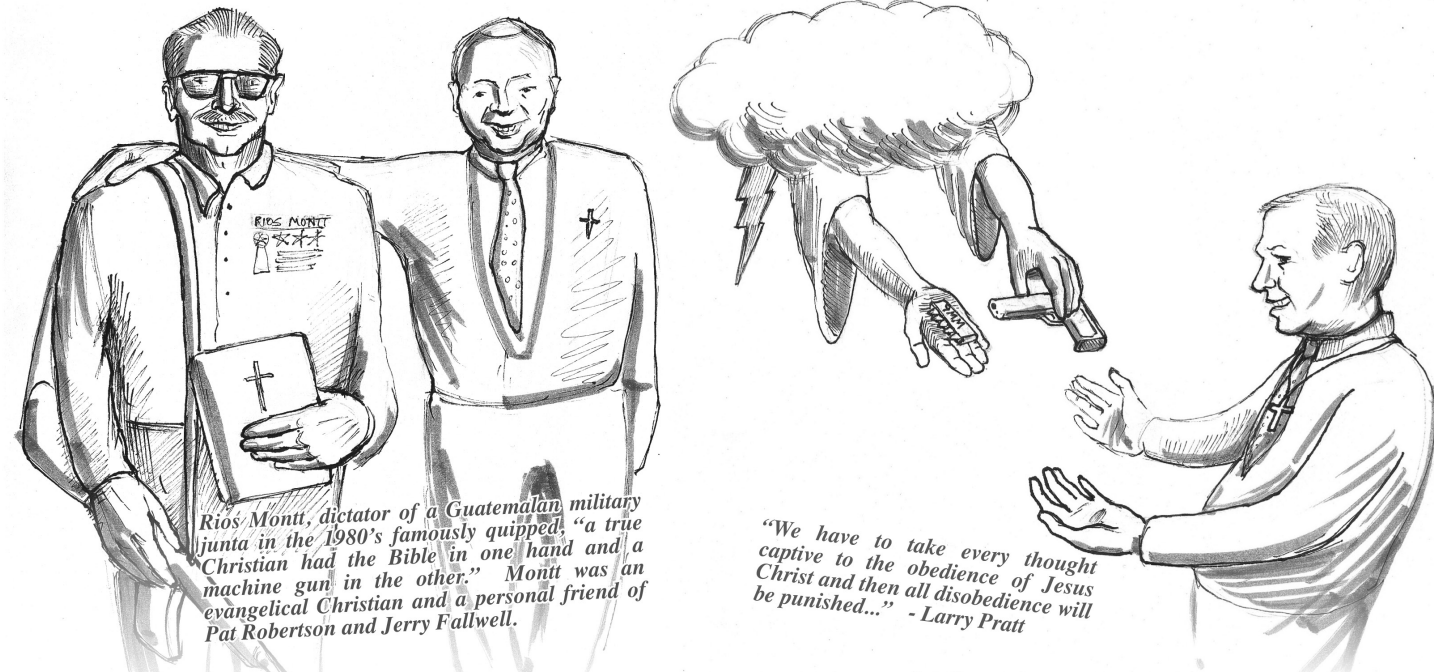


According to a recent report from the philadelphia Daily News, officer Thomas Tolstoy of the Narcotic squad accused of sexually assaulting three women during drug raids. A woman who chose to be identified as “Naomi” spoke with the Philadelphia Daily News as well as Lady Gonzalez, 29, of Kensington, and Dagma Rodriguez, 33, of West Kensington who made similar allegations against officer Tolstoy. After coming forwards Naomi has received multiple threatening phone calls from “restricted” numbers which she believes are being made by police officers telling her to keep quiet.

According to the Daily article, “Tolstoy, 35, a 10-year-veteran of the force who has been with the Narcotics Field Unit since December 2002, is one focus of a growing FBI and police probe into allegations of police misconduct.”

“In March, the Daily News reported that Cujdik, Tolstoy and other officers disabled

# LARRY PRATT: MILITANT, WHITE, CHRISTIAN NATIONALISM MOVES FROM THE MARGINS TO THE MAINSTREAM

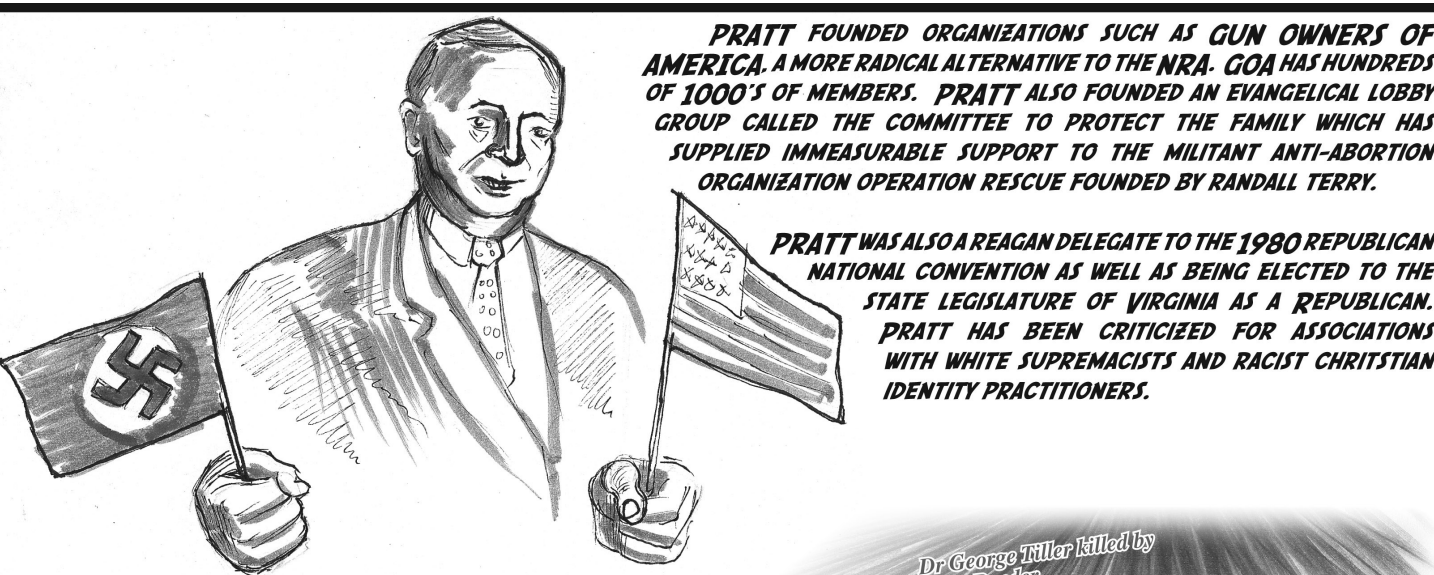


**ORIGINALLY FROM CAMDEN NJ. THIS MILD MANNER MILITANT TRAVELED TO GUATEMALA DURING THE 1980’S AND RUBBED ELBOWS WITH THE RIGHT-WING, ANTI-COMMUNIST DEATH-SQUADS OPERATING THERE UNDER A SERIES OF MILITARY JUNTAS.**

**PRATT WAS INVOLVED WITH THE COUNCIL FOR INTERAMERICAN SECURITY (CIS), AN INFLUENTIAL THINK TANK OF THE “NEW RIGHT” ALONG WITH THE WHITE NATIONALIST PAT BUCHANNAN. THE CIS WAS PART OF THE WORLD ANTI-COMMUNIST LEAGUE, A NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATION WAS SUPPORTED BY THE CARTER AND REAGAN ADMINISTRATIONS AND IS CONNECTED**

**TO THE RIGHT-WING, KOREAN UNIFICATION CHURCH. THE CIS SUPPLIED WEAPONS TO RIGHT WING DEATH SQUADS ALL OVER THE WORLD FOR DECADES UNDER THE AUSPICES OF BATTLING COMMUNISM.**

**PRATT RETURNED TO THE US AND WROTE THE BOOKS ARMED PEOPLE VICTORIOUS (1990), AND SAFEGUARDING LIBERTY: THE CONSTITUTION AND CITIZEN MILITIAS (1995) ARGUING FOR THE FORMATION OF RIGHT-WING, CHRISTIAN MILITIAS. AS WELL AS AN ANTI-COMMUNIST MILITANT, PRATT WAS A FERVID, EVANGELICAL CHRISTIAN AND MILITANT ANTI-ABORTIONIST.**



**PRATT WENT ON TO PARTICIPATE IN THE 1996 CAMPAIGN OF PAT BUCHANNAN. IT WAS RECENTLY REVEALED THAT PRATT WAS ALSO A CLOSE ASSOCIATE OF FORMER ATTORNEY GENERAL JOHN ASHCROFT.**

**PRATT SEEMS TO FILL THE GRAY AREA BETWEEN MAINSTREAM POLITICS AND EXTREMISM. HE ACTS AS A BRIDGE BETWEEN THE TWO POLES, INJECTING EXTREMISM INTO MAINSTREAM POLITICAL DISCOURSE AND LENDING A MAINSTREAM POLITICAL SENSIBILITY/CREDIBILITY TO VIOLENT FRINGE GROUPS. HIS IS THE FACE OF A CREEPING AUTHORITARIAN, THEOCRATIC TENDENCY THREATENING OUR NATION, POISONING OUR POLITICAL DISCOURSE.**

**WE HAVE SEEN, IN THE LAST FEW MONTHS ALONE, A RASH OF VIOLENCE PERPETRATED BY RIGHT-WING MILITANTS. THIS IS YOUR LEGACY LARRY PRATT:**



comic by eian weissman -- [weissman42@gmail.com](mailto:weissman42@gmail.com) -- [www.dhruva.vesana.com](http://www.dhruva.vesana.com)

surveillance cameras during raids of bodega and smoke shops that sold tiny ziplock bags, which police consider drug paraphernalia. After the officers sliced or yanked the wires, thousands of dollars in cash and

merchandise went missing, the merchants said.”

That is, until they were caught on film at one bodega whose owner had a backup

camera system installed.



# A Rainbow Flag Over Habana

by Marina Sitrin  
May 2009

We are on a main city block early Saturday morning. People gathering are high spirited, almost giddy. As people begin to form a line I exhale deeply, imagining it is just one of many lines that are the Cuban reality. This line, however, is different. This line begins to shift, snake, jump, and dance. This is a conga line. There are hundreds of us, perhaps even a thousand, and we are dancing in a conga line down one of the most central streets in Havana. And we are not just some random group of people, we are a group of lesbians, gay men, transvestites, transsexuals, and bisexuals, along with heterosexual friends and sometimes even families, all gathering for the International Day Against Homophobia. For over a week, activities have been taking place throughout Havana, as well as in a few provinces in the country to educate about sexual diversity, and to celebrate it.

While the events that have been taking place have the feeling of Gay Pride, they are also Cuba's version, meaning it is organized for people, not by the people. But this is Cuba. A place where all passions cannot, and are not, controlled from above. I felt the contradictions that are Cuba surface in a palpable way on the Saturday of the conga line. I saw some of the things I love most about this contradictory island, and some of the things I like least.

The main event Saturday began first thing in the morning, something not typical of a weekend celebration in Cuba, or, better said, a country where things typically begin early, but people attend late. But on this day, despite the early hour, by 10am thousands were flowing in and out of the Pabellon Cuba, one of Havana's main exhibition centers. It was an important and strategic decision to locate the main event in the Pabellon. For this reason, let me contextualize it for you.

Its history goes back to the first years of the Revolution. It was built with the intention of being a central pavilion for art, music and politics. Since the early 1960s book fairs, art and artisan exhibits, concerts and musical performances, almost always free, have taken place here. It is an open air pavilion, where all can see and hear what is taking place. The Pabellon is located centrally on "la Rampa", also known as 23rd street. La Rampa is sort of the mid town Manhattan meets city hall, meets the Village region of Havana. Many of the most important government buildings are here,

with the exception of The Organization of Popular Power and the Communist Party headquarters, both in the Plaza of the Revolution. Press agencies, health ministries, and political apparatus are located in buildings up and down la Rampa. Some of the most important hotels, contemporary and historical are located within sight of the street. Two blocks away on Calle N is the Hotel Nacional, which hosts some of Cuba's most important international dignitaries, from President Cristina Kirchner of Argentina and Hu Jintao of China, to Queen Elizabeth, Kate Moss and Jack Nicholson. A little further up la Rampa on L Street is the Habana Libre, previously the US Havana Hilton, transformed after the triumph of the Revolution into the headquarters for the leadership of the Revolution, who aptly renamed it The Free Havana Hotel. It was there that Che Guevara's parents came to see him, after the guerillas took power, not having seen their son in many years. Airline and tourist offices line both sides of the street, along with tourist shops and an artisan fair, mixed together with food to be purchased for national currency, or convertible pesos, and tons of movie theaters. Only two blocks from the Pabellon, is the world famous Coppelia Ice Cream Parlor, where Cubans will sometimes wait hours on line for the best ice cream ever made (and I will swear to it being the best). The opening scene to *Fresa y Chocolate*, the award winning Cuban film directed by Tomás Gutiérrez Alea and Juan Carlos Tabío, about gay oppression in Cuba, takes place here. The screenplay writer for *Fresa y Chocolate*, Abel Paz, attended a number of the

at UNEAC, the artists and writers union, as well as a few cinemas located on la Rampa.

La Rampa, this main political, cultural, and tourist drag, is where the main event for the International Day Against Homophobia took place. This is tremendously important. The visibility of thousands of gay men, lesbian women and transvestites flowing in and out of the Pabellon and up and down la Rampa, all attending the events of the day, many dressed in a way that was openly gay, including some wearing or displaying rainbow flags. In many ways it was a scene not dissimilar from any Gay Pride event around the globe. Though this is Cuba. And this is la Rampa. It was not even a decade ago when young gay men would come and find one another outside one particular cinema on la Rampa, their dress not so flamboyant, people learning by word of mouth which theater it was, and then continuing on to the late night roving roof-top parties. Parties that were gay, and were not legal, or were always broken up by police when found, under the pretext they were not legal. Over the years this scene has continued, and has become increasingly public, often on the Malecon, the famous wall along the sea edge that runs the length of Havana. This area too, is only a few blocks from where la Rampa meets the water. This is a long way from the 1970s, when there were jails specifically for the reeducation of those who were "counter revolutionary" and "sexually deviant."

While the harassment of gays and lesbians is nothing

like what it was in Cuba's past, it does still exist, from the formal harassment by police on the street, to discrimination in workplaces and at school, and not even to speak of the cultural and social taboo. These were the main topics people spoke out about in the open mic sessions in the Pabellon. The anger and frustration were spoken forcefully by one man, "In a country that says all are equal I still have to be afraid! I don't have the same rights! I cannot kiss my partner! I can get kicked off the bus! I can lose my job! That the police always harass me! It is wrong!" was responded to with applause, whistles and a lively standing ovation of the many hundreds participating. This was an exciting and inspiring space, the diversity and openness with which people were claiming political space and equal rights was powerful. People were simultaneously celebrating identity and diversity and shouting for more space and rights. Rights they want respected in the day to day. As another man shouted "I want diversity everyday! I don't

want one day or one week of acceptance! I want a life of acceptance! A country of equality!"

A friend of mine, who identifies as a lesbian and has attended all of the past events related to sexual diversity, had more tepid enthusiasm. She commented, "Sure, this is good, sure, but it has happened before and it is not enough. What is going to happen? People will go home and things will not change."

I don't know. In all my years living in or visiting Cuba I have never seen such a display, and especially in such large numbers and in such an important public space. I have also never heard the central leadership of the State take on the question of sexual diversity with such seriousness. Not only is Mariela Castro Espín, the director of the National Center of Sex Education (CENESEX), speaking out and organizing, but the president of the Organization of Popular Power, Ricardo Alarcon said to *Prensa Latina* on the day after the main Saturday event, "the essence of Socialism is the inclusion rather than exclusion of people for their sexual orientation or religion." And further that, "the Cuban drive against homophobia shows maturity and culture achieved by our society." In addition, the intervention in popular culture reflects a seriousness with which the State wants to reach people who are not already involved or thinking about these questions. There is a television ad for sexual diversity along the same lines as a poster and post card campaign, the slogan of which is, "DOS IGUALES tambien hacen pareja" (two of the same also make a couple).

The Spanish word, *pareja*, means both "the same" as well as partner or couple. One poster has a photograph of two white china cups on white saucers, each with lipstick marks on the lip of the cup. Another poster, with the same slogan has two similar, though different, old fashioned soap brushes used by men for shaving.

Does this mean complete sexual diversity in Cuba? No. Does mean the State is taking it more seriously and people are responding? Yes. How far will the State take this new approach to diversity? Unclear. How much people continue to organize, without the State, is, I believe, the most important, and still outstanding question. This past week of events was a sign that space is opening, and that people are beginning to enter it. With caution sometimes, and at others with shouts and a song, but it is a step, and an exciting one.

Marina Sitrin is a writer, lawyer, dreamer and translator. She has edited "Horizontalism: Voices of Popular Power in Argentina", and the forthcoming "Insurgent Democracies – Latin America's New Powers." Marina is currently living in Havana, Cuba. She can be reached by email at: Marina.sitrin@gmail.com



# Flowers of Resistance and Liberty continued from page 7



*Mothers of the "disappeared"*

Zapata, they emerged from the mountains and took over several towns in their region. They staged their uprising to coincide with the signing of the NAFTA agreement between the governments of the United States, Canada and Mexico which sought to better open the markets of Latin America for exploitation. Their uprising was a message that resistance had not been crushed. The Mexican military attempted to crush their uprising but the Zapatistas resistance and international outcry over the Mexican military's brutal campaign prevented the military from winning and an uneasy truce was established that continues to this day. The Zapatistas have not abandoned their fight or laid down their arms.

More cracks appeared in the U.S.'s grip on Latin America. In 1998 Hugo Chavez, a leftist army colonel, was elected president of Venezuela in a landslide victory demonstrating that leftists could win an election in Latin America. With popular support firmly entrenched amongst Venezuela's poor Chavez has been able to withstand U.S. efforts to overthrow his government, as demonstrated when following a U.S. backed military coup against Chavez in 2002, hundreds of thousands of Venezuela's poor marched on the presidential palace and demanded Chavez' return to power. With the U.S. unable to intervene militarily on the side of the military (in fact, many soldiers took the side of the people) the generals had no choice but to release Chavez and return him to the presidency. Chavez' return to power through the actions of Venezuela's people strengthened the resolve of Latin America's people and demonstrated the era of militaries seizing power without consequence in the region was over.

The absence of military repression and most importantly the collapse of the economies of Latin America in the late 90's and early 2000's modeled on the "free market" principles imposed by the U.S. opened the door for the return of widespread leftist activism in Latin America. The people of the region had watched free market economies of their countries transfer the wealth of the region out of Latin America, leaving much of the population impoverished while a small

elite became super rich. The people were open to the alternative vision articulated by martyred activists in the 70's and 80's. The people wanted to control their own economies, destiny and communities. They organize amongst themselves and discovered they were the majority.

Leftist political parties used decentralized mobilizations, with massive popular support, started winning election after election in Latin America. Leftist parties won power in Brazil, Argentina, Ecuador, Paraguay, and Uruguay. The socialist president of Chile, Michele Bachelet's parents had been tortured in the 70's under Chile's right wing military regime presided over by the U.S. puppet General Augusto Pinochet. In Nicaragua, Daniel Ortega, the former guerrilla commander of the Sandinistas who overthrew the right wing military regime of Somoza in 1979, was elected back into power at the head of a coalition of left wing movements. Evo Morales, a leftist president of indigenous descent presides over Bolivia has nationalized the country's vast natural gas fields, proclaiming an end to foreign exploitation of the country's national resources. In 2009 a leftist movement won elections in El Salvador; the president is an admirer of the assassinated Archbishop Romero and vowed to finish what Romero started. The United States, preoccupied with (2) wars it is in danger of losing in Iraq and Afghanistan, could only stand helpless and watch as the people of Latin America reasserted themselves and their independence.

In April of 2009, newly elected U.S. president Barack Obama attended the Summit of Americas conference in Latin America. He gave a speech seeking to bury bad relations that have developed between Latin America and the United States under the Bush administration. While he was well received by the Latin American leaders his speech was met with lukewarm applause and reception. Nicaraguan president Daniel Ortega in his speech boldly stated that Obama may be a good man, but is powerless to change U.S. policy toward Latin America. Ortega may be right, as Obama has not lifted the punitive sanctions and trade embargo on Cuba or closed the Guantanamo Naval Base that

occupies the eastern tip of Cuba. There is no reason for Obama to continue punishing the Cuban people for the revolution that liberated their country from U.S. domination.

An even more ominous development activists and movements in Latin America & the US should be aware of is the aggressive posture the US military has taken towards the rise of left activism and governance in Latin America. In 2008 the U.S. military's Southern Command coined the phrase "radical populism" to describe the leftist movements and governments that have gained prominence and been democratically elected in Latin America! The message to those who would like to repeat the atrocities of the past in Latin America should, must be a firm Never Again! We should not expect the U.S. government to sit on its hands and continue helplessly watching leftist parties and movements threaten their interests in Latin America. It is the responsibility of leftist activists in the U.S. to offer full support to our allies in Latin America.

Most importantly we must not forget the sacrifices of the activists who were murdered, disappeared and tortured by right wing military regimes in the 70's and 80's. If history has taught us anything by the re-emergence of leftist activism and victories in Latin America it is that in the absence of military repression and fear, right wing politics cannot flourish nor compete with the community based politics of the left. That rings true in Latin America as well as the U.S. We should remember the sacrifices of those fallen activists whenever we question whether the article we are writing is making a difference or if the protest we are organizing or attending is going to accomplish anything, or if the project we are developing is "revolutionary." Think of the young Chilean activist who was gunned down in a soccer stadium for organizing a protest or the Argentinean activist who was tossed out a helicopter door into the ocean for publishing an underground newsletter, or the El Salvadorian activist kidnapped and murdered for organizing the poor in shanty towns. The soil of Latin America is stained by their blood and because of their sacrifices. Flowers of resistance and liberty are sprouting across Latin America.

Robert Saleem Holbrook #BL-5140  
SCI-Greene  
175 Progress Drive  
Waynesburg, PA 15370

5.11.09

## G20 Summit Hitting Pittsburgh Sept 24-25th

From three rivers contingency planning association:

The City of Pittsburgh will be hosting the G-20 Summit on September 24-25, 2009 at the David L. Lawrence Convention Center. With a number of world political leaders in attendance, and with increased potential for political demonstrations / disruptions, this event has been given the status of a National Special Security Event by the United States Department of Homeland Security (DHS). The City of Pittsburgh, along with Allegheny County and Region 13, have already begun planning special operations for this event.

More info:

<http://www.organizepittsburgh.org>  
<http://bailoutpeople.org/>



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# Racist Band pulls out of Philly show

by One People's Project

One Life Crew, the Cleveland-based band whose music has been seen as promoting sexism, racism and homophobia, and has commanded a fan base among neo-Nazi circles, has pulled themselves out of a show they had planned for June 6 at the First Unitarian Church after widespread complaints to the Pastor and church board members.

Rev. Nate Walker, the pastor of the church, noted that after speaking with members of One Life Crew about their music and the controversy surrounding the show, the band decided not to perform at the church to quell the concern. Rev. Nate, as he is often referred, had spoken with the band to discuss those concerns, and was put off particularly by them laughing at the idea of them being seen as racist simply because their singer is Turkish and the drummer is Jewish. When Rev. Nate made note of their more racially charged lyrics, they dismissed them as not being hate speech, but rather "free speech".

The cancellation came after two weeks of correspondence via phone calls and emails to the church by people concerned with the show from all over the country. Rev. Nate said he received "four dozen" phone calls to his cell phone in two days, some angry and some respectable. Many of those calls came this week when Rev. Nate responded in a May 27 pastoral statement to the activism around the show launched by the Trenton and Philadelphia chapters of Anti-Racist Action. During a meeting Saturday evening which included members of Philadelphia Anti-Racist Action, One People's Project, Philadelphia Commission on Human Relations and First Unitarian Church Board members, all parties agreed that there was a breakdown in communication among all that were concerned with the show that led to the Church feeling as it was being unfairly attacked and activists against the show feeling as though they were not being heard. It resulted in tensions being raised to the point that the meeting was called at the church to ease those tensions.

One Life Crew's history with controversy is nothing new. Its lyrics sparked outcry in the nineties from activists in their hometown of Cleveland, and their response has been with violence or threats of violence. A female activist was threatened with rape by the band, and a riot famously broke out during the performance of one of their more racist songs, during which someone in the audience objected and band members jumped off stage. That incident resulted in the band being dropped from their label Victory Records, who by that time were receiving letters and phone calls about the band routinely. One Life Crew broke up in 1998, although in 2004 a split 7-inch with the North Carolina band Empire Falls was

released. At the time of that release, rumors swirled about the politics of Empire Falls and their lead singer Bryan Scorch. In recent years however, Empire Falls is seen performing at white power concerts, which for many put to rest questions about the nature of the band.

The One Life Crew show that was to take place in Philadelphia was one of two reunion shows that had been promoted since January; the other show is to be held on June 5 at Peabody's Café in Cleveland. Although there was heavy internet promotion of the shows, it was originally unclear if the show was happening in Philadelphia or who was promoting it. R5 Productions are in charge of promotions at the First Unitarian Church, and in the fifteen years of doing shows there they have turned it into the biggest venue for punk shows in the city. Although they announce all their shows on their website, they never announced the One Life Crew date, and the church, when first asked about the show, sent an email saying the show was not on their schedule. When asked, R5 Productions informed people that the show was "100% on" and was being promoted by Joe Hardcore of Friends Stand United (FSU), an anti-racist crew originally formed in Boston to keep neo-Nazis out of the punk scene. Recently, that stance has been compromised because the Philadelphia FSU came into an agreement with the local neo-Nazi outfit Keystone State "Skinheads" (KSS) sometime in 2007 that they would be allowed to come to shows provided they don't wear their colors, don't engage in violence, and don't recruit. Members of KSS have since engaged in violence outside the Church and have indeed attempted to recruit, despite the agreement. In addition, KSS member Keith Carney, who Joe Hardcore grew up with, had been seen photographing crowds at other shows and gathering information about who attendees were. He and a few other KSS members were expected to attend the One Life Crew show in Philadelphia.

Rev. Nate noted that R5 Productions, as they are the only ones with the insurance and the agreement with the church, were indeed the promoters of the One Life Crew show and Joe Hardcore was working through them. He had met with not only the promoters, but also with Carney, who told him he had been going to shows at the church for ten years, and that he is not the person he is depicted as. He noted that Keystone State "Skinheads" had recently changed their name to Keystone United and that they are not about white power but rather white pride. Rev. Nate has noted that the controversy and the eventual cancellation have left the promoters "furious".

## NAFTA's Refugees continued from page 13

If a concerned friend calls the station to see if they've been picked up, in the worst cases the person will have never been even entered into the system. Some ICE detainees have spent months trapped in detention centers before they were able to connect to friends on the outside.

A fearful and vulnerable population of workers is of course always good for business, as it is when racial divides create situations in which workers can't organize effectively. When Bush disappointed his own largely anti-immigrant base by issuing guest worker permits, allowing immigrants to cross the border to do agricultural work most US citizens find unsavory (or too much effort), he was pragmatically putting his business and class allegiances into practice; maintaining uncomfortable and legally precarious situations for immigrants while allowing businesses to squeeze the most they can out of workers. With the current flight of economic refugees back south across the borders, fines against business can have less of an effect while appeasing a racist anti-immigration movement. The pressure has been felt locally as well with a number of raids on immigrant communities.

One raid last August seemed directly

orchestrated by ABM Industries, a janitorial service for a King of Prussia office park. Workers were told to come in for a mandatory training. Not showing up meant they wouldn't receive their paycheck. When they did show, the ABM managers left the room, only to have ICE agents come in and detain 42 workers, nearly the entire workforce. That is, with the exception of white employees who, without any check on their identity were allowed to leave. The rest were held for immigration hearings.

Of course there has been some organizing for immigrants well being as well. 2006's Mayday protests, among the biggest such protests in the United States, sowed some ground for more work. Philly has a wide range of organizing around immigrant justice across this city. Groups representing a variety of tactics from legal advocates, legislative advocacy, social services and community organizing are all prominent. JUNTOS Casa de los Soles is based in South Philly as a membership organization of Mexican and Latino immigrants working to build power for justice in Philadelphia and in their home countries.(<http://vamos-juntos.org>) HIAS and Council Migration Service offers legal services for asylum seekers and domestic violence survivors, children and families.([www.hiaspa.org/](http://www.hiaspa.org/)

[home/index.htm](http://home/index.htm)) Pennsylvania Immigration and Citizenship Coalition is a diverse group that brings together professionals, advocates and immigrant groups of different backgrounds to share information and resources, identify common problems, and advocate for solutions. (<http://picc-pa.org/>). Open Borders Project (Proecto Sin Fronteras) provides adult education and technical training services to immigrant and non-immigrant Latino residents of Open Borders Project provides adult education and technical training services to immigrant and non-immigrant Latino residents of Philadelphia. (<http://openbordersproject.org>) Villanova and UPenn Law Clinics provide immigration legal services as well as Community Legal Services. ([www.clsphila.org](http://www.clsphila.org)) New Sanctuary Movement is a coalition of different faith based communities working together address the injustices faced by the immigrant community of Philadelphia. This list only represents a few of the many organizations in Philly working and organizing around immigration.

For those of us who are immigrants or inclined to stand beside immigrants, the situation may seem bleak. Luis Ramirez' murder could be read as a deadly serious indicator of what it means to live precariously, at risk, to experience an economy

that will expel you from your home, the place you live, and then keep you under a gun, in detention centers, or facing violence from other working people. But we're also in a time where many givens are being put into question. While the neocons, and the Republican party in general, are staggering from some serious blows, and alternatives to neoliberalism, such as Keynesianism and socialism, are being talked about seriously, radicals should be contributing even reformist measures to the dialogue and expand the parameters of the conversation over immigration, mandating global maximum and minimum wages for example. And of course, always be articulate and practical in our solidarity. Supporting undocumented workers in their struggles is just the beginning.

Footnotes:

1. In KSS' case, the nazi organization made a very public effort last year to cozy up to white supremacists in the Phila PD. Ironically they were simultaneously being infiltrated by the FBI's Joint Terrorism Task Force and peppered with snitches internally./ This information which surfaced in discovery after local anti-racist activists were arrested picking a fight with cops and FBI agents wearing nazi garb at a falsely advertised KKK rally in Love Park last year ).

2. A number of cities decided to not cooperate with immigration authorities seeking to deport refugees of the US sponsored or led wars in Latin America



# Leonard Peltier

continued from page 9



Cops at Wounded Knee

AIM men, women, and children and opened fire. Leonard Peltier helped a group of young people to escape from the rain of bullets.

When the shootout ended, AIM member Joseph Killsright Stuntz was found dead, shot in the head. His death has never been investigated.

Agents Coler and Williams were wounded during the shootout and then killed at point blank range. The two agents had in their possession a map with the Jumping Bull ranch marked on it.



Peltier during his arrest

According to FBI documents, more than forty Native Americans participated in the shootout, but only four were charged with killing the two agents: three AIM leaders—Dino Butler, Bob Robideau, and Leonard Peltier—and Jimmy Eagle.

Butler and Robideau were the first to be arrested, and at their trial they stated that they had fired in self-defense. The jury believed the act was justified due to the atmosphere of terror that prevailed at Pine Ridge at the time. They were both found innocent.

The FBI was furious about the verdict and dropped the charges against Jimmy Eagle, according to their memos, “...in order to direct the full weight of the prosecution on Peltier”.

Meanwhile, Leonard Peltier went to Canada, believing that he would never have

a fair trial. On February 6, he was arrested and then extradited to the United States due to the statement of a woman named Myrtle Poor Bear, who said she had been his girlfriend and had seen him fire at the agents. As a matter of fact, she had never known him and was not present at the time of the shootout. In a later statement, she said that she had been coerced into giving false testimony as a result of being terrorized by FBI agents.

## Two life sentences!?

The only evidence against Leonard Peltier was the fact that he was present at the Jumping Bull ranch during the fatal shootout. These are just a few examples of the injustice of the trial:

- The case wasn’t brought before the judge who had presided over the trial of Robideau and Butler, but instead before another judge with a reputation for making decisions favorable to the prosecution.
- Myrtle Poor Bear and other important witnesses were forbidden to testify about FBI misconduct.
- Testimony about the “reign of terror” on the Pine Ridge Reservation was severely limited.
- Important evidence, such as conflicting ballistic reports, was deemed inadmissible.
- The red pick-up that had been followed onto the ranch was suddenly described as Peltier’s “red and white van.”
- The jury was isolated and surrounded by federal marshals, making jurors believe that AIM was a security threat to them.
- Three young Native Americans were forced to give false testimony against Peltier after having been arrested and terrorized by FBI agents.
- The prosecutor couldn’t produce a single witness who could identify Peltier as the shooter.
- The government said that a cartridge found near the bodies was fired from the presumed murder weapon, and alleged that this was the only pistol of its kind used during the shootout and that it belonged to Peltier.

As a result of the Freedom of Information Act suit, FBI documents turned over to the defense showed that:

More than one weapon of the type attributed to Peltier had been present at the scene.

The FBI intentionally hid the ballistics report showing that the cartridge could not have come from the presumed murder weapon.

There was no doubt whatsoever that the agents followed a red pick-up onto the territory, and not the red and white van driven by Peltier.

Strong evidence against several other suspects existed and was withheld.

None of this evidence was presented to the jury that found Leonard Peltier guilty. He was given two consecutive life sentences.

Two consecutive life sentences?! How do they plan to implement that? Doesn’t the sentence reflect a deep fear of the spirit of Crazy Horse?

## Bill Clinton: at the service of the FBI

A new trial was sought after several of these abuses came to light. During one hearing, the federal prosecutor admitted that “...we can’t prove who shot the agents.” The court realized that Peltier could have been found innocent if the evidence hadn’t been unduly withheld by the FBI, but a new trial was denied on the basis of technical errors.

The former Leonard Peltier Defense Committee stated:

“In 1993, Peltier requested Executive Clemency from President Bill Clinton. An intensive campaign was launched and supported by Native and human rights organizations, members of Congress, community and church groups, labor organizations, luminaries, and celebrities. Even Judge Heaney, who authored the court decision [denying a new trial], expressed firm support for Peltier’s release. The Peltier case had become a national issue.

On November 7, 2000, during a live radio interview, Clinton stated that he would seriously consider Peltier’s request for clemency and make a decision before leaving office on January 20, 2001.

In response, the FBI launched a major disinformation campaign in both the media and among key government officials. Over 500 FBI agents marched in front of the White House to oppose clemency. On January 20, the list of clemencies granted by Clinton was released to the media. Without explanation, Peltier’s name had been excluded.”

## Current defense efforts

Leonard’s parole hearing has finally been

scheduled for July 27, 2009, and is the focus of an international campaign in the coming months. There is absolutely no legitimate reason to continue to hold Leonard Peltier in prison. If he is not granted clemency or does not win parole this year, he will not have another parole hearing until 2017. Please write a letter to the Parole Board and /or sign a petition urging his release at <http://www.ipetitions.com/petition/parole2008/>.

Petitions are also being circulated urging President Obama to grant clemency for Leonard Peltier and urging Congress to investigate FBI misconduct on Pine Ridge and the “reign of terror” that existed between 1973 and 1976. To add your name, consult: <http://www.whoisleonardpeltier.info/clemency.htm>.

Supporters are also demanding a congressional investigation into FBI misconduct in Indian Country, against the American Indian Movement and in the case of Leonard Peltier. See: <http://www.whoisleonardpeltier.info/investigation.htm>

The defense team continues to press for thousands of documents that are still being retained by the FBI, around 142,579 pages according to Peltier’s legal team which brought a new suit against the FBI in Minnesota in March of this year. Of particular interest are documents dealing with the extent to which the Federal Bureau of Investigation paid informants to infiltrate Leonard Peltier’s defense team. Alleging that the information would reveal confidential sources, harm national security and impede the transnational “war on terrorism,” the FBI has refused to release the documents that would reveal their illegal activities on Pine Ridge and the continued violations of Leonard Peltier’s basic human rights. See: <http://www.whoisleonardpeltier.info/FOIA.htm>.

In a recent letter Leonard said: “If my case stands as it is, no common person has real freedom. Only the illusion until you have something the oppressors want....

In the spirit of Crazy Horse, who never gave up.”

Let’s don’t let it stand as it is.

What will you do?

Write a letter to Leonard:  
Leonard Peltier # 89637-132  
USP Lewisburg  
PO BOX 1000  
Lewisburg, Pennsylvania 17837

For further information, consult the page of the new Leonard Peltier Defense Offense Committee: <http://www.whoisleonardpeltier.info> or write to [contact@whoisleonardpeltier.info](mailto:contact@whoisleonardpeltier.info).

Carolina Saldaña is a freelance writer and activist in Mexico.



PATHWAYS TO UNKNOWN WORLDS: SUN RA, EL SATURN & CHICAGO'S AFRO-FUTURIST UNDERGROUND 1954-1968, Features paintings, drawings, videos, manuscripts and prints by and about Sun Ra, a musician, mystic, philosopher and Afro-futurist. INSTITUTE OF CONTEMPORARY ART, 118 S. 36th St., 215-898-7108.

YOU. ME. WORLD. A workshop on local and global citizenship to raise funds to support students as they travel to Nicaragua to build a school 8:30-10:30pm, FREE , A-Space, 4722 Baltimore Ave., 215-727-0882.

**THE FUTURE OF HIV PREVENTION** This community town hall meeting features an engaging dialogue on how society can work more effectively to address the HIV/AIDS epidemic among men of color  
6pm, FREE , Arch St. United Methodist Church, 55 N. Broad St., 215-568-6250.

Anti-Casino Circus  
12:00pm 12:45pm @ No Slots Spot 718 Market  
Street info: <http://www.casinofreephila.org/>

A workshop on Universal Healthcare and the Left  
7:00 pm to 8:30 pm @ Wooden Shoe Books

Author Andrew Bacevich reads from *The Limits of Power: The End of American Exceptionalism*  
7:30PM at the Central Library 1901 Vine Street,  
19103

## Philahealthia hosts talk about establishing philadelphia health coop

**"And Now, DECLARE PEACE!" Demonstration & Bell-Tolling, Independence Mall, Noon, July 3  
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further notice!  
10pm till....@ LAVA, 4134 Lancaster Ave.

Philadelphia author Warren Hoffman will read from and discuss his new book, *The Passing Game: Queering Jewish American Culture*. 7 to 8:30 p.m. at studio 34, 4522 Baltimore Avenue in West Philly

Join us for an evening of inspiration and resistance! Panelists will be talking about the ways in which the criminalization of political movements has changed over the past few decades and how this has played out in the courts, in the media and on the streets. With Laura Whitehorn, Ramona Africa, SF8 lawyer Soffiyah Elijah, Francisco Torres and more. 6:30 PM @ the Rotunda, 4014 Walnut St \$8 - \$800,000 suggested donation, no one turned away

Prometheus Radio Project Dance Party  
Andalalucha - Spanish Disco, Baile Funk,  
Dance Hall & Beyond!, Radio Rios etc.  
10pm - 2am at CHA-CHA RAZZI; 1918 Bancroft  
St, South Philly (Off of Mifflin, btw at 16th and

11th Allied Media Conference in Detroit  
info: [www.alliedmediaconference.org](http://www.alliedmediaconference.org)

Are you a self motivated, revolutionary minded troublemaker?? Come and join this exciting project!! Every other week the defcollective meets to plan future issues, organize our notorious benefit dance parties, edit text, gossip and speculate on the inevitable collapse of capitalism. We want you here!!! Every 1st and 3rd Monday of the month upstairs at LAVA, 4134 Lancaster Ave.

North Philly Food Not Bombs is an organization that rescues discarded vegetarian food and redistributes it to hungry people for free. FNB operates Sundays and Mondays. Sunday-- cooking at LAVA at 3pm, serving at 19th and Vine at 5:30pm. Monday- cooking at LAVA at 5pm, serving at 19th and Vine at 7:30pm

Weekly Meeting Every Monday from 6:00 pm - 9:00 pm St. Lukes Church; 330 S. 13th St. (between Pine & Spruce) Email: [actupphilly@critpath.org](mailto:actupphilly@critpath.org) for more info.

Packing Café Every Tuesday from 7:30 pm - 9:30 pm The A Space; 4722 Baltimore Ave.  
E-mail: [info@booksthroughbars.org](mailto:info@booksthroughbars.org) for more info

Interested in being involved in the campaign  
for Mumia's release either email [icffmaj@aol.com](mailto:icffmaj@aol.com)  
or call 215 476 8812

B-boys, b-girls, emcees, graffiti writers and all the rest are invited to work it at this monthly hip-hop event. Every last Thu. 10pm-2am, FREE.

50th & Baltimore to benefit  
the defenestrator prisoner  
mailing  
Call for info (215)727-9692

508 S. Fifth Street Philadelphia, PA  
215.413.0999 woodenshoe@rocketmail.com

A worker owned collective bike shop. 50th and Baltimore

Bike repair co-op at Neighborhood Bike Works.  
Tools, advice and recycled parts available. Every  
Tuesday, Thursday and Sunday from 6:30-9pm  
40th and Locust Walk, behind St. Mary's Church

Stephen L. Carter reading from his book Jericho's Fall  
7:30PM @ the Central Library 1901 Vine Street,  
19103 215-686-5322 Cost: FREE

Twilight Zone Event - 50th Anniversary of the Twilight Zone. Panel discussions!!!  
2pm @ Robin's Bookstore, 13th between Chestnut and Sansom

Benefit Poetry Reading and Open Mic for Wooden  
Shoe Books, with the New Philadelphia Poets.  
7-9pm @ Wooden Shoe Books

A reading by Chris Hedges from his new book *Empire of Illusion: The End of Literacy and the Triumph of Spectacle*  
7:30PM @ the Central Library 1901 Vine Street,  
19103 215-686-5322 Cost: FREE

Parade Camp: Animal Adventure  
9:00 am to 12:00 pm @ Spiral Q Puppet Theater.  
More info <http://www.spiralq.org/paradecamp.html>

Northeast APOC conference in North Philly. For more info: [www.illvox.org](http://www.illvox.org) or e-mail [APOC-Philly@riseup.net](mailto:APOC-Philly@riseup.net)

National Food Not Bombs gathering. Omaha, Nebraska. More info @ [omahafnb@gnb.com](mailto:omahafnb@gnb.com)

The 7th annual Bike Part Art Show Party and silent auction  
Benefitting Neighborhood Bike Works  
7-10 pm Studio 34, 4522 Baltimore Avenue in West Philly \$5 suggested donation

Come to learn, work and share by reading and writing to prisoners in Pennsylvania's solitary confinement units.  
3rd Thursdays at LAVA 6-9pm

Meets 1st Tues. at Local 4, AFSCME, 1606 Walnut.  
6:30-9pm [www.prawnworks.net](http://www.prawnworks.net)

Free movie screenings held every saturday at  
Wooden Shoe Book Store. 7:30 PM, 508 south  
5th street -- 215 413 0999

Every Thursday at 7 pm @ 4515 Baltimore Ave.  
[toolkit@riseup.net](mailto:toolkit@riseup.net) for more info.

The Lancaster Avenue Autonomous space is a center for radical media and organizing located at 4134 Lancaster Ave. in the Belmont Neighborhood of West Philly. We hold regular general meetings every 2nd Tuesday of the month. info: 215.387.6155 or info@lavazone.org \* lavazone.org

Accessible by the 34 trolley. Plenty of parking for cars and bikes. They pass the hat to cover rent.  
4722 Baltimore Avenue Philadelphia, PA 19143  
215.727.0882 a-space@defenestrator.org

Anarchist bookstore owned and run by an unpaid collective of geniuses with nothing better to do than sit around talking philosophy and riots. Carries a wide range of anarchist and radical books, periodicals, pamphlets, T-shirts, patches, CD's records etc.

A collectively run anarchist gallery and meeting/community space. Events are free and generally start at 7:30pm unless otherwise noted.

Open Tuesdays and Thursdays 10am-2pm or by appointment  
33 Maplewood Mall, Germantown 215-848-1120

American Friends Service Committee HQ.  
Contains meeting spaces and offices for a gazil-  
lion different entities.  
1501 Cherry Street